THE Nation.

ROBERT GATES'S REVOLUTION
Michael T. Klare

OBAMA'S NUCLEAR CHALLENGE
Jonathan Schell

THE HOPE LEXICON
Naomi Klein

A NEW DEAL for CULTURE

D.D. Guttenplan
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Letters

C. Wright Mills, Man for All Seasons

Bar Harbor Island, Fla.

I appreciated Norman Birnbaum's tribute to C. Wright Mills ["The Half-Forgotten Prophet," March 30], though I don't agree that he is a "half-forgotten prophet" or that he was "tied to his times," which suggests that his work was only relevant to the times in which he lived. His classics are still in print—*White Collar*, *The Power Elite*, *The Sociological Imagination* and *C. Wright Mills: Letters and Autobiographical Writings* as well as the book under review.

As the author of the Introduction to *Letters*, I was asked to speak at Books & Books, the largest independent bookstore in South Florida, on its publication in 2000. I was pleased by a good turnout and especially by a group of sociology students from the University of Miami, who told me they were great fans of Mills, having discovered his work when their sociology professor instructed them *not* to read it.

The relevance of Mills as "prophet" of our current crisis, symbolized by the bonuses of the AIG executives and their ilk, is summed up in *The Power Elite* by what Mills calls "the higher immorality":

"In a society in which the money-maker has had no serious rival for repute and honor, the word 'practical' comes to mean useful for private gain, and 'common sense,' the sense to get ahead financially. The pursuit of the moneyed life is the commanding value in relation to which the influence of other values has declined. So men easily become morally ruthless in the pursuit of money and fast estate-building.

"A great deal of American corruption—although not all of it—is simply a part of the old effort to get rich and then to become richer."

Those words from 1956 seem, like much of Mills's work, a critique of 2009.

Dan Wakefield

Philadelphia

Mills is hardly "half-forgotten." In my discipline, political science, his legacy is alive and well. True, the modern social sciences seem to be at odds with Mills's lack of methodological "professionalism" (read: adherence to academic technocracy). His conclusions are also well to the left of today's poli sci mainstream. Nevertheless, he is a founding father of what political scientists call "elitism," which contends that power in the United States is concentrated in the hands of a few. His work was widely debated by "pluralists," including the great Robert Dahl, who held more or less the opposite view. You can't get out of graduate school in this field without having to contend with this debate, started by Mills. Five decades on, *The Power Elite* is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand American democracy.

Josh Leon

Culture—the Unkindest Cut

Portland, Ore.

Eyal Press's "A Perfect Storm" [March 30], on the economic implosion of the nonprofit world, shows that much more than our economic health is at risk. Culture and community are eroding faster than the stock market. Here in Oregon the Legislature has slashed budgets for many social service and public assistance programs, and organizations that help define what it means to be an Oregonian are disappearing. The Oregon Historical Society has closed its research library. The coffers of the Oregon Cultural Trust, which receives its funding from a special license plate people can pay an extra fee for, have been raided by the state. Many institutions will be so crippled that if and when the economy improves, they won't be able to rebound.

Margaret Foley

Her Story

New York City

Christine Smallwood states that Elaine Showalter's book *A Jury of Her Peers* is the first literary history of American female

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The Gates Revolution

The preliminary Defense Department budget announced by Defense Secretary Robert Gates on April 6 represents the most dramatic shift in US military thinking since the end of the Vietnam War. Gates merely hinted at the magnitude of the proposed changes, claiming only that he seeks to "rebalance" the department's priorities between conventional and irregular warfare. But the message is clear: from now on, counterinsurgency and low-intensity conflict will be the military's principal combat missions, while other tasks, such as preparing for an all-out war with a well-equipped adversary, will take a decidedly secondary role.

COMMENT

The budget message does not lay out this shift in broad strategic language. Rather, it is articulated in terms of the weapons systems Gates has chosen to terminate or cancel and those he has chosen to retain or augment. Most media attention has focused on the former—the big-ticket items he rightly says are no longer needed or too costly and "exquisite" to meet the Pentagon's requirements. These include the F-22 Raptor, a $143 million supersonic jet fighter originally designed to shoot down Soviet aircraft; the DDG-1000 Zumwalt-class destroyer, a $3.3 billion stealth combat vessel; and the Army's Future Combat System, an ensemble of futuristic tanks and armored vehicles.

The proposed cancellation or termination of these and other multibillion-dollar programs has provoked a firestorm of criticism from lobbyists, promilitary organizations, Congressional hawks and members of Congress whose districts will suffer manufacturing losses if the systems are cut. Major media outlets have fed the flames by portraying Gates's overhaul as a set of massive spending cuts, even though spending would increase by 4 percent.

As the debate proceeds, the cancellations will no doubt generate most of the Congressional skirmishes and headlines. But far more important from a strategic perspective are the programs Gates wants to add or augment. These include Predator drones, sensor-equipped turboprop planes, conventional helicopters, the littoral combat ship (LCS) and expanded Special Operations capabilities—mostly low-tech systems intended for use in counterinsurgency or low-intensity environments.

These programs are far less costly than the super-sophisticated weapons Gates seeks to eliminate but far more useful, he argues, in the irregular, small-scale operations that US troops are conducting in Iraq and Afghanistan and are likely to encounter in future conflicts. "We must rebalance this department's programs in order to institutionalize and enhance our capabilities to fight the wars we are in today and the scenarios we are most likely to face in the years ahead," he declared.

The similarities between Gates's proposals and the strategy adopted by the Kennedy administration are too great to ignore. Kennedy assumed office at a time when all-out war with the Soviet Union was the military's primary concern, and he rapidly ordered a shift in focus toward unconventional conflict in the Third World. Subversive insurgency poses a new and growing threat, Kennedy declared at West Point in 1962. "It requires…a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force and therefore a new and wholly different kind of military training."

After the tragedy of Vietnam, officers purged military thinking of its counterinsurgency leanings and refocused on conventional war strategy—a posture seen most conspicuously in the 1991 Gulf War and in the 2003 invasion of Iraq. More recently, under the prodding of Gen. David Petraeus, counterinsurgency has made a comeback. Gates aims to insti-

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VOLUME 288, NUMBER 17, MAY 4, 2009
PRINTED APRIL 15

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INTERNET: Selections from the current issue become available Thursday night at www.thenation.com.

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Slide Show: The healthcare fight
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tutionalize that shift and make it, once again, the centerpiece of US strategy. "I want to get that capability"—to fight irregular conflicts—"into the base budgets so that it will continue and we don't forget, as we did after Vietnam, how to do what we're doing right now so successfully in both Iraq and Afghanistan," he said.

The ghosts of Vietnam are everywhere in Gates's budget request and in his accompanying statements. He wants more helicopters, as Kennedy and Johnson sought during Vietnam. He wants an additional 2,800 Special Operations troops and "more special-forces-optimized lift mobility and refueling aircraft." The LCS, intended for anti-piracy and counterinsurgency operations in coastal areas, brings to mind the Swift boat operations in the Mekong Delta. Again recalling Vietnam, high priority is to be placed on training and equipping foreign soldiers to engage in counterterror and counterinsurgency operations.

The most immediate requirement for these initiatives, Gates says, is to be found in Afghanistan, where the Obama administration plans to deploy up to 30,000 additional troops. The first increment, 17,000 soldiers, was announced February 17, and thousands more will likely be sent following a review of the war effort this summer. It is clear, though, that Gates is looking beyond Iraq and Afghanistan to a future in which low-intensity wars are the principal arenas in which US forces will be engaged.

Gates has not said where, exactly, he sees troops fighting what could be termed the "next Afghanistans." A careful review of the strategic literature suggests, however, that officials are worried about the spread of Al Qaeda–linked formations to other countries in Central Asia and to "ungoverned" spaces in Africa. The recent establishment of the US Africa Command (Africom) and the growing presence of Special Operations forces in places like Mali, Chad and Somalia hint at what might be in store.

Gates is too careful to speak in public of such scenarios. But by optimizing capabilities for combat in these settings, he risks inculcating a predisposition to engage in more wars of this type. It is essential, then, that Congress and the public devote as much attention to the strategic implications of Gates's focus on counterinsurgency as to the economic and jobs implications of eliminating certain big-ticket weapons systems. MICHAEL T. KLARE

Michael T. Klare, Nation *defense correspondent, is professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College. His latest book is* Rising Power, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy.

Webb's Prison Crusade

100 DAYS

After more than a year of hearings before the Joint Economic Committee, in March Virginia Senator Jim Webb introduced the National Criminal Justice Commission Act of 2009. The legislation would create a blue-ribbon panel with the mandate to make recommendations for wholesale reform of criminal justice policy.

There's dramatic symmetry to Webb's taking on this issue. A proud member of the white working class, raised a Democrat, he sided with the right during the culture wars only to return to the Democratic Party in response to the kleptocratic neoconserva-

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Noted.

MANURE! Not everyone is in love with the White House Kitchen Garden. **Michelle Obama**'s offense? She went organic. The **Mid America CropLife Association** (MACA), which flacks for agribusiness giants **Dow AgroSciences**, **DuPont Crop Protection** and **Monsanto**, doesn't want the first lady getting people thinking they can grow safe, healthy, chemical-free food in their backyards. "Americans are juggling jobs with the needs of children and aging parents," MACA complained to the White House. "The time needed to tend a garden is not there for the majority of our citizens, certainly not a garden of sufficient productivity to supply much of a family's year-round food needs."

While the fertilizer peddlers say the White House garden's organic status causes them to "shudder," Detroit-area gardener **Colleen Vanderlinden** counters: "Organic gardening has reached a level of…popularity that it so wholeheartedly deserves. The First Lady taking the step of putting in an organic garden at what is not only the White House, but the people's house, rings not of some empty symbolic gesture, but of a sign that the tides are turning." That is what really makes the chemical companies shudder.

JOHN NICHOLS

DODGY DRAFTS: Every year, American banks make billions of dollars in overdraft fees. In 2006 these individually small amounts netted $17.5 billion for the industry, and as the economy tanks, banks are expecting the bonanza to increase.

Banks automatically enroll their customers in overdraft loan programs, frequently without the option of declining. Once enrolled, the bank will cover the amount of a check even if your account is empty. The overdraft fees can reach $39 per check and are commonly incurred on multiple transactions simultaneously because of "high-to-low clearing": the largest check is cleared first, bouncing any smaller checks that happen to clear the same day. With the use of debit cards, transactions can remain pending for days before clearing, greatly increasing the likelihood of such an unfortunate coincidence. As a result, the average overdraft is $17 while the average fee charged is $34.

Presented as a slap on the wrist for the occasional mistake, overdraft fees are actually a form of usury—small, extremely high-interest loans that target the underemployed and working poor. They are rarely a one-time occurrence. According to the **Center for Responsible Lending** (CRL), 75 percent of overdraft fees can be attributed to "chronic borrowers," people whose finances compel them to treat this as short-term credit. CRL and **Americans for Fairness in Lending** are campaigning for the **Consumer Overdraft Protection Fair Practices Act**, which was reintroduced in Congress by **Carolyn Maloney** on March 12. If the act passes, banks would no longer be able to automatically enroll customers in these programs, and the manipulative practice of high-to-low clearing would no longer be legal. R.H. LOSSIN

OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE: When **George W. Bush**'s lawyers claimed that the Geneva Conventions should be dismissed as "quaint" and "obsolete" and that the president could order torture abroad and warrantless wiretapping at home, Yale Law School dean **Harold Koh** and Indiana University law professor **Dawn Johnsen** were prominent among their critics. President **Barack Obama** has now nominated Koh and Johnsen to key posts—legal adviser to the State Department and head of the Office of Legal Counsel, respectively—to help restore respect for the rule of law. Yet conservatives have mounted campaigns to oppose the nominations.

What are they afraid of? Koh and Johnsen are the antithesis of **John Yoo** and **David Addington**, the lawyers who claimed almost monarchical power for Bush, but that should be a reason for celebration. Koh and Johnsen are skeptical about claims of unchecked authority, either by the president vis-à-vis the other branches or by the United States on the world stage. Some bloggers label such views "radical," but they are only as radical as the Constitution's framers, who feared the aggrandizement of presidential power and committed the new nation to respect for international law.

Some have charged that Koh would place international law above the Constitution. But that is a canard. He readily acknowledges the pre-eminence of constitutional law. He has argued that it is sometimes appropriate, when interpreting our Constitution, to look to international and foreign law for guidance—a view shared by the majority of the Supreme Court. The truly radical view is the one that lies behind those criticizing Koh and Johnsen, which claims that when it comes to the "war on terror," the president can ignore not only international law, but our own system of checks and balances. DAVID COLE

PERSONA GRATA: Some things change; others, it seems, may not. From 1982 to 1985, the Soviet government repeatedly denied **Stephen F. Cohen**—then a *Nation* columnist ("Sovieticus") and now a New York University professor and *Nation* contributing editor—a visa to enter the country. The government's complaints against Cohen included his associations with dissidents and survivors of Stalin's gulag and his "falsifying of Soviet history."

A quarter of a century later, Russian President **Dmitri Medvedev** bestowed on Cohen the highest state honor given to foreigners, the **Order of Friendship**, "for his large contribution to strengthening Russian-American cooperation." (Other recent American recipients include **Donald Kendall**, co-founder and former CEO of PepsiCo, and **James H. Billington**, the Librarian of Congress.) The award was presented to Cohen in Moscow on March 19 by Russian Foreign Minister **Sergei Lavrov**. Cohen expressed his deep gratitude for the honor and agreed with Lavrov that there have been "positive signs" in US-Russian relations since the Obama administration took office. On the other hand, Cohen observed, his own contribution to improved relations has clearly been far from adequate, referring to the "new cold war" that has unfolded since the 1990s and that he's described in his recent *Nation* articles.

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tive incarnation of the modern GOP. If his election in Virginia signaled that conservative backlash politics had reached a point of diminishing returns, his crusade against the prison-industrial complex can't help but make me feel optimistic that the culture wars may finally be drawing to a close.

Webb's biography makes him the perfect vessel for this endeavor; it also helps that he's so indifferent to the rudiments of electoral politics. In fact, it's a kind of miracle the man is a senator at all. On a recent afternoon, as he toured the Bragg Hill Family Life Center, which provides social services to ex-offenders in Fredericksburg, Virginia, he was so stone silent that co-founder Rev. Joseph Henderson grew self-conscious. "You can ask any questions," Henderson offered nervously. "We preachers talk too much sometimes." As we walked through the gym, Webb had to be prompted to shake the hands of the (adorable) children scurrying around him, and the look on his face as he prepared to gladhand was that of a man steeling himself for the dentist's chair.

But once we were inside the presentation room, where about a dozen people who work in corrections and social services had assembled to talk about the criminal justice system, Webb's evident passion and fluency with the issues created a palpable bond with the attendees. "We have 5 percent of the world's population and 25 percent of the people in prison," he said. "Either we're the most evil people on earth, or we're doing something wrong." As for the imprisonment of nonviolent drug offenders: "I saw more drug use at Georgetown University Law Center when I was a student there than I've seen anywhere else in my life," he said, to knowing laughs. "And some of those people are judges."

Webb then listened as attendees enumerated the various dysfunctions, injustices and perverse incentives created by the metastasizing prison-industrial complex: "I can get $600,000 from the state for a new jail," said Fredericksburg Mayor Tom Tomzak, "but I can't get $40 for Healthy Families."

There are some hard policy questions in Washington, but whether we should have more, or fewer, people in prison is not one of them. The question is whether politicians remain paralyzed by fear of culture war demagogy. The mere fact that Webb is calling for a commission, a classic Washington way of outsourcing explosive issues like intelligence reform or closing military bases, suggests that members of Congress remain wary.

On the other hand, the right-wing, tough-on-crime backlash that started in the wake of the Watts riots in 1966 corresponded to a dramatic rise in the crime rate in the United States: violent crime more than tripled between 1960 and 1980. This doesn't mean the politics of crime were just about crime—the issue stoked racial solidarity among white voters—but it does mean that crime and the political reaction to it are related, and that the drop in the crime rate in the past decade (down almost 14 percent) should make reform more possible.

So far Webb has gotten nineteen co-sponsors, including Southern Democrats like Mary Landrieu and Kay Hagan and Republican Lindsey Graham. Most promising, he has enlisted the support of Arlen Specter. Facing a primary challenge from his right, Specter is as attuned to the risk of provoking a conservative backlash as any politician in the country. If he thinks he can get away with it, it's a good sign.

Politics is a path-dependent business: most elected officials simply imitate the actions and language of those who came before them. Occasionally, an innovator comes along who senses that the old rules no longer apply. If he's successful, others follow. That's how the culture wars started, with men like Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, who understood there were new resentments and frustrations to tap that weren't available to an older generation of conservatives. "People follow leaders," Webb told me, "if leaders give them something to believe in."

On this issue, Jim Webb, onetime culture warrior, seems to be just such an innovator in reverse. CHRISTOPHER HAYES

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

On Dealing With Pirates

We've shoveled ransom to the Wall Street band.
Their lobbyists seek even sweeter deals.
When next they want our dough for screwing up,
We should, perhaps, send in some Navy Seals.

Obama's Nuclear Challenge

"So today, I state clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons," President Obama said at the open-air rally in Prague on April 5. With these words came a change in the global air, as if a window had been opened a crack in a dark room that had been sealed shut for decades. On only two previous occasions had an American president proposed the abolition of nuclear arms. The first was Truman's proposal at the United Nations in 1946 to place all nuclear technology under international control and devote it entirely to peaceful purposes, and so to strangle the nuclear age in its cradle. Stalin's Soviet Union, bent on developing the bomb, would not agree.

COMMENT

The second was the summit meeting at Reykjavik, Iceland, in 1986, where President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev came within an ace of agreeing to full nuclear disarmament. Their bid foundered on Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, which he would not give up and Gorbachev would not accept. Thereafter the pronuclear consensus was restored. Its chief assumption, embodied in the doctrine of deterrence, was that safety from nuclear weapons paradoxically depended on their continued presence. Unremitting readiness to carry out genocide and worse had somehow been accepted as an inescapable commitment of even the greatest civilizations.

Obama's words disrupted this collective suicidal trance. He placed his commitment in an appropriate context: Prague had been the scene of Czech protests against Soviet domination, and Obama saluted those "who helped bring down a nuclear-armed

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empire without firing a shot." The reference was doubly fitting. In the first place, the popular movement broke the spell of omnipotence that had surrounded the totalitarian empire. Like the bomb, the Soviet Union had been shielded by a reputation of immovability. The resistance movements in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere, using the "power of the powerless," in the phrase of Václav Havel, gave the lie to this illusion. They revealed the possibility of "the impossible" and made it happen. Obama acknowledged the parallel with nuclear disarmament when he took note of those "who hear talk of a world without nuclear weapons and doubt whether it is worth setting a goal that seems impossible to achieve," and, advising Czechs to remember the lessons of their Velvet Revolution, declared fatalism "a deadly adversary."

In the second place, it was that same resistance, together with Gorbachev's perestroika, that by ending the cold war opened the clearest path to nuclear disarmament since 1946. Now that the rivalry that had been used to justify the threat of annihilation had been liquidated, might it be possible to eliminate the weapons that posed that threat? Might this "impossible" thing also be possible? The first three post–cold war presidents passed up the opportunity. Obama has seized it.

Unfortunately, as soon as he announced the goal of abolition, he added that it would not "be achieved quickly, perhaps not in my lifetime." With those words, the crack of the window seemed to narrow, the moral gloom thickened and the fatalism he had just renounced settled in again. Sighs of relief were almost audible among the upholders of the pronuclear consensus. As *The Economist* noted, "The world may never get to zero. But it would help make things a lot safer along the way if others act in concert. If North Korea and Iran can keep counting on the protection of China and Russia in their rule-breaking, progress will be all too slight." In other words, a likely insincere commitment to abolition is to be a new talking point in stopping others from joining the nuclear club, which, for its part, will go on as before.

A further sentence in Obama's speech gave support to such views. Speaking of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), the president said, "The basic bargain is sound: countries with nuclear weapons will move toward disarmament, countries without nuclear weapons will not acquire them." But moving toward disarmament is not the same as disarming. It is one thing to say to the world, "We all must do without nuclear weapons," and quite another to say, "You must do without nuclear weapons, and we will keep 1,500 of them for as long as we are all alive." In the latter case, the abolition commitment would become one more layer of hypocrisy in a situation already overloaded with it. But after more than sixty years of deceptive promises, the countries that do without nuclear weapons will not accept a "bargain" that gives a new lease on life to a double standard they already reject.

These fears are mitigated by the agenda of measures Obama announced as first steps toward abolition. A wish list of arms controllers of recent years, they include ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; negotiating a fissile material cutoff treaty; negotiating mutual cuts in nuclear warheads with Russia, perhaps to a level of 1,500 or 1,000; and fortifying the NPT. These proposals would be welcome in any context, but they take on added meaning when viewed as way stations on a journey to a nuclear-weapons-free world. Most interesting, perhaps, was Obama's promise to host a Global Summit on Nuclear Security in the next year. Will it concentrate solely on nonproliferation or acknowledge the indispensable link between that goal and full nuclear disarmament? The answer, of course, will not depend on Obama alone. He has brought the nuclear dilemma back into public view. But his vision is a work in progress, a ground of contention on which all who desire disarmament are invited to exert themselves.

Was Obama's speech historic? Not yet. It was an invitation to participate in history. It will be historic if we make it so. Obama says he is prepared to postpone abolition until he has died. He is 47. I wish him long life. Let us free the world of nuclear weapons while he is still among us. JONATHAN SCHELL

Jonathan Schell is the Harold Willens Peace Fellow at The Nation Institute. His most recent book is The Seventh Decade: The New Shape of Nuclear Danger, *which presents the case for a world without nuclear weapons.*

Seat Senator Franken

On matters of policy, Senate Republicans are entitled to play the party of no. But when it comes to forming a functional Senate and assuring that Minnesotans are represented, they have strayed far beyond the bounds of fair positioning. They are not just saying no; they are erecting unreasonable barriers to the seating of duly elected Senator Al Franken.

COMMENT

The contest between Republican incumbent Norm Coleman and Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party challenger Franken was agonizingly close, with Franken prevailing by just 312 votes in what should be the final count. Reviews by the bipartisan State Canvassing Board and a three-judge panel appointed by the Minnesota Supreme Court were exhaustive and appropriate. But Coleman has lost at every turn, with the jurists determining April 13 that "Franken received the highest number of lawfully cast ballots in the November 4, 2008, general election." The judges heard all Coleman's complaints and still concluded that the election "was conducted fairly, impartially and accurately."

Coleman has exhausted every reasonable appeal. Unfortunately, he has not exhausted the resources of Senate Republicans, who seem willing to fill his coffers in order to keep vacant a seat that has been won by a Democrat they particularly dislike. Coleman intends to appeal to the Minnesota Supreme Court, which is all but certain to agree with the judicial panel—then Minnesota Secretary of State Mark Ritchie, a Democrat who has patiently and responsibly overseen the recount, is expected to sign a certificate of election for Franken. Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty, a Republican with presidential ambitions, will then be in a position to clear the way for seating Franken. But Coleman's lawyers hint at plans to mount extended appeals in the federal courts, which could give Pawlenty an excuse to keep the seat vacant for another six months. That's an abuse of the recount process. Ritchie should sign the certificate, as should Pawlenty, whose responsibility is to respect the will of his state's voters and their right to representation. It is time to end the charade and seat Senator Franken. JOHN NICHOLS

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Alexander Cockburn

Dead Souls

The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, nowhere with more caprice than with the criminal justice system. On the plus side, there are at least a couple of good trends: a tilt from the death penalty (with serious qualifications about the "living death" alternative I discussed two weeks ago) and a move away from imprisonment for victimless crimes—as evidenced by medical marijuana laws; impending reform of the Rockefeller drug laws; and Prop 36 in California, offering treatment alternatives to prison.

On the minus side, there are some grim developments. For violent felons, sentencing laws have been getting steadily worse. There have been big increases in sentencing enhancements (time added to your "base sentence" for using a gun, having prior felony convictions, gang-related nature of the crime, hate crimes, etc.). Some of these enhancements are new; others have been around for a long time but have gotten much more punitive. (There was a heartening victory in California in November with the defeat of Prop 6, which would have increased penalties for gang-related crimes.)

Other bad trends include the growing use of solitary confinement units, the tendency to try juveniles as adults and, of course, the post-9/11 general loss of civil liberties, thanks to the ever more conservative federal judiciary. This is not to forget the vindictive sex-offender laws that have been passed in the last few years.

So the introduction of "living death"—life without the possibility of parole (LWOP)—as a sentencing option can be seen as part of the overall trend of toughening sentences for violent criminals, except when it is introduced as an alternative to the death penalty, and even here there's a paradox: there's much less money and access to the appeals process available in states like California to fight life imprisonment without parole, or with parole for that matter, than there is to fight the death penalty.

But the focus on LWOP tends to blur the fact that it is very hard for lifers not doing LWOP to get out on parole. Scott Handleman, an attorney in San Francisco who has spent much time representing prisoners in parole cases, has been helpful with the chastening data. In California last year, 31,051 prisoners were serving sentences of life with the possibility of parole. Of those, 8,815 have passed their "minimum eligible parole date," meaning they have served long enough to be receiving parole hearings. Of those, 6,272 had hearings on the Board of Parole's calendar last year. (Some prisoners serving beyond their minimum eligible parole date do not get hearings in a given year because they were denied for multiple years in a prior hearing.) Only 272 lifers were found suitable for parole by the board in 2008.

Moreover, the board's decisions in these 272 cases were subject to Governor Schwarzenegger's review. The California governor has the power, in murder cases, to reverse the board's ruling and take away the parole date. For other life-sentence crimes, he can order the board to reconsider its decision. So only a fraction of those whose parole cases got reviewed were actually released to the streets. In 2007 the board found 172 lifers suitable for parole; Governor Schwarzenegger reversed 115 of those decisions, referred eighteen back to the board for reconsideration, modified two and let stand only thirty-seven. That means in 2007 somewhere between thirty-seven and fifty-seven life-term prisoners got out of prison in the whole state of California. Out of the roughly 30,000 prisoners who were serving sentences of life with the possibility of parole in 2007, somewhere around 0.1 percent to 0.2 percent were released. Last year the situation improved very slightly, thanks in part to a Supreme Court of California ruling that parole cannot be denied forever.

There's a popular conception, nourished by the shock jocks on talk-radio, that people doing life sentences get put back on the streets by way of a revolving door, Willie Horton style. In fact, release for lifers is a rare phenomenon.

That being the case, what is the point of introducing LWOP as a sentencing alternative? What LWOP means is that for convicted murdurers who would otherwise get life with parole, often at very young ages, and who redeem themselves through rehabilitative efforts, even the remotest possibility of release will never become available. The hopelessness that comes with an LWOP sentence is a heavy psychological burden to bear. According to the Equal Justice Initiative, at least seventy-three inmates—most of whom are minorities—are serving LWOP for crimes committed at age 13 or 14.

It's expensive running an ever-expanding gulag. State after state is finding that herding the dangerous classes into prison with tools such as the Rockefeller drug laws and throwing away the key for decades or forever by nonnegotiable mandatory minimum sentencing costs too much. But then there's the problem: what to do about the prison unions and the towns (like many in New York) that survive economically only because of prison jobs, where the prison population is greater than the population of free people, and the free people love it because, apart from the jobs keeping their kids from fleeing the post-industrial or post-ag wasteland, the prisoners count in the census, giving these towns and regions more representation in statehouses, hence more political power, than they deserve.

Shades of Gogol, who was born 200 years ago this year. The motor of his great novel is the economic use of "dead souls"—deceased serfs listed by the state as assets of the landlords. The novel's central character, Chichikov, goes around buying them up. New York State could take Gogol's hint and start auctioning its "living dead" as income generators to other states in need. Looking at our criminal justice system here, Gogol would surely use the line carved on his gravestone: "And I shall laugh my bitter laugh." ■

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Katha Pollitt

What Do (Battered) Women Want?

Rihanna's on-again, off-again postassault relationship with fellow hip-hop star Chris Brown—I guess technically it's still an alleged assault—has set off a deluge of commentary about why women stay with violent men. Some feminists think one shouldn't even ask the question: battered women already know people think they're weird and complicit; what they need is nonjudgmental support. Moreover, focusing on the victim masks the more important question, Why do men abuse women? Indeed, there have been plenty of articles expressing horror at teenage girls who side with Chris and blame Rihanna for "provoking" him—but none that I've seen look closely at their male classmates (or parents). Leaving aside those who claim that women abusing men is just as big a problem—check the comments beneath just about any online post by a woman about abuse—we take it for granted that, sure, men will hit, so it's up to women to run away.

No wonder middle schoolers take a blasé view—look at the adults. Here in New York, Democratic State Senator Hiram Monserrate has been charged with slashing his girlfriend's face with broken glass, requiring twenty stitches. Although the woman described the attack to doctors at the hospital, and her account was backed up by pictures from a security camera outside Monserrate's apartment, his supporters staged a rally featuring a woman who claimed to be an advocate for battered women, and the party is considering raising funds for Monserrate's defense. Surprised? This is the party led by Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, who made rape charges against his aide J. Michael Boxley go away, according to the alleged victim; two years later, Boxley pleaded guilty to sexual misconduct (no jail time) after being charged with raping another woman.

Why do women stay? It's a question that rankles feminists because it sounds exasperated and accusatory. In *Slate*, for example, Linda Hirshman argues that empathy is "the soft bigotry of low feminism"—victims should just get a grip. (To be fair, it's hard not to be disappointed that Monserrate's girlfriend now supports his improbable story that he slipped while bringing her a glass of water.) But another problem with the question is that it implies that we don't know the answer, or rather, answers. In fact, we know a lot. There are practical reasons: economic dependence, fear of child custody loss, having no place to go, no network of support. There is fear that the man will kill her if she tries to leave—indeed, experts say that's the most dangerous time for a woman. And there are emotional factors, too: learned helplessness, low self-esteem, despair. Batterers are good at isolating their partners from friends, family and other sources of support and help, and at making them feel worthless, ugly and stupid. When we express bewilderment that a woman could stay with a man who hit her, we forget that physical abuse isn't like being punched by a mugger; it takes place in a context of ongoing emotional abuse and manipulation.

For a firsthand account that makes these dynamics painfully clear, check out Leslie Morgan Steiner's *Crazy Love* (St. Martin's Press). Steiner, who writes for the *Washington Post* on issues of work/family balance, describes her four-year relationship with her violent first husband with harrowing immediacy. Unlike most battered women, Steiner came from privilege: her family was well-off; her father was a judge. She was fresh out of Harvard and working at *Seventeen* when she fell for "Conor," a dashing eight-years-older broker she met on the subway. Steiner was inexperienced and vulnerable, with troubles of her own—alcoholic mother; remote father; teenage bouts of anorexia, drugging and drinking. Within months, Conor had become her whole world. He quickly cut her off from her friends, alienated her mother, and persuaded her to quit her job and move to Vermont. By the time he hit her, five days before their wedding, his unpredictable rages had worn her down. Soon, he was beating her, choking her, pushing her down the stairs, throwing food at her and pointing a gun at her head. Some batterers are profuse with apologies and flowers; Conor never acknowledged laying a finger on her.

And yet, she loved him. Even more, she felt sorry for him. He had grown up poor in South Boston; like many abusers, he came from a violent, chaotic family and had been abused himself. It took her a long time to see that she couldn't save him, that in fact the best thing she could do for him was to leave. Even then, it was only after he nearly killed her that she overcame her shame, guilt and terror, called the police and filed for divorce. That a woman might stay with her batterer because she pities him and wants to rescue him from his demons was a new insight for me. But it makes sense: women are brought up to empathize with men, to be caregivers, to see themselves as wise and mature, and men as "little boys," as Steiner frequently describes Conor. What battered women need, Steiner writes, are "empathy and courage to help," the very qualities they waste on their abusers. Not averted eyes—or moralistic lectures masquerading as feminism, either.

* * *

Vacation From War. Once again, the Bosnian Initiative Frankfurt, a German peace and human rights organization, is gearing up to run its summer camp for kids of all ethnicities in the Balkans and its sessions in Germany for Jewish Israeli and Palestinian teenagers. *Nation* readers have become a mainstay of this effort to bring young people together for an unforgettable summer of fun and friendship. $150 funds one child's stay and makes you a godparent, but checks of any size are warmly welcomed. Make them out to Vacation From War and mail them in care of me at The Nation, 33 Irving Place, 8th floor, New York, NY 10003. ■

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Naomi Klein

A Lexicon of Disappointment

All is not well in Obamafanland. It's not clear exactly what accounts for the change of mood. Maybe it was the rancid smell emanating from Treasury's latest bank bailout. Or the news that the president's chief economic adviser, Larry Summers, earned millions from the very Wall Street banks and hedge funds he is protecting from reregulation now. Or perhaps it began earlier, with Obama's silence during Israel's Gaza attack.

Whatever the last straw, a growing number of Obama enthusiasts are starting to entertain the possibility that their man is not, in fact, going to save the world if we all just hope really hard.

This is a good thing. If the superfan culture that brought Obama to power is going to transform itself into an independent political movement, one fierce enough to produce programs capable of meeting the current crises, we are all going to have to stop hoping and start demanding.

The first stage, however, is to understand fully the awkward in-between space in which many US progressive movements find themselves. To do that, we need a new language, one specific to the Obama moment. Here is a start.

Hopeover. Like a hangover, a hopeover comes from having overindulged in something that felt good at the time but wasn't really all that healthy, leading to feelings of remorse, even shame. It's the political equivalent of the crash after a sugar high. Sample sentence: "When I listened to Obama's economic speech my heart soared. But then, when I tried to tell a friend about his plans for the millions of layoffs and foreclosures, I found myself saying nothing at all. I've got a serious hopeover."

Hoper coaster. Like a roller coaster, the hoper coaster describes the intense emotional peaks and valleys of the Obama era, the veering between joy at having a president who supports safe-sex education and despondency that single-payer healthcare is off the table at the very moment when it could actually become a reality. Sample sentence: "I was so psyched when Obama said he is closing Guantánamo. But now they are fighting like mad to make sure the prisoners in Bagram have no legal rights at all. Stop this hoper coaster—I want to get off!"

Hopesick. Like the homesick, hopesick individuals are intensely nostalgic. They miss the rush of optimism from the campaign trail and are forever trying to recapture that warm, hopey feeling—usually by exaggerating the significance of relatively minor acts of Obama decency. Sample sentences: "I was feeling really hopesick about the escalation in Afghanistan, but then I watched a YouTube video of Michelle in her organic garden and it felt like inauguration day all over again. A few hours later, when I heard that the Obama administration was boycotting a major UN racism conference, the hopesickness came back hard. So I watched slideshows of Michelle wearing clothes made by ethnically diverse independent fashion designers, and that sort of helped."

Hope fiend. With hope receding, the hope fiend, like the dope fiend, goes into serious withdrawal, willing to do anything to chase the buzz. (Closely related to hopesickness but more severe, usually affecting middle-aged males.) Sample sentence: "Joe told me he actually believes Obama deliberately brought in Summers so that he would blow the bailout, and then Obama would have the excuse he needs to do what he really wants: nationalize the banks and turn them into credit unions. What a hope fiend!"

Hopebreak. Like the heartbroken lover, the hopebroken Obama-ite is not mad but terribly sad. She projected messianic powers onto Obama and is now inconsolable in her disappointment. Sample sentence: "I really believed Obama would finally force us to confront the legacy of slavery in this country and start a serious national conversation about race. But now he never seems to mention race, and he's using twisted legal arguments to keep us from even confronting the crimes of the Bush years. Every time I hear him say 'move forward,' I'm hopebroken all over again."

Hopelash. Like a backlash, hopelash is a 180-degree reversal of everything Obama-related. Sufferers were once Obama's most passionate evangelists. Now they are his angriest critics. Sample sentence: "At least with Bush everyone knew he was an asshole. Now we've got the same wars, the same lawless prisons, the same Washington corruption, but everyone is cheering like Stepford wives. It's time for a full-on hopelash."

In trying to name these various hope-related ailments, I found myself wondering what the late Studs Terkel would have said about our collective hopeover. He surely would have urged us not to give in to despair. I reached for one of his last books, *Hope Dies Last*. I didn't have to read long. The book opens with the words: "Hope has never trickled down. It has always sprung up."

And that pretty much says it all. Hope was a fine slogan when rooting for a long-shot presidential candidate. But as a posture toward the president of the most powerful nation on earth, it is dangerously deferential. The task as we move forward (as Obama likes to say) is not to abandon hope but to find more appropriate homes for it—in the factories, neighborhoods and schools where tactics like sit-ins, squats and occupations are seeing a resurgence.

Political scientist Sam Gindin wrote recently that the labor movement can do more than protect the status quo. It can demand, for instance, that shuttered auto plants be converted into green-future factories, capable of producing mass-transit vehicles and technology for a renewable energy system. "Being realistic means taking hope out of speeches," he wrote, "and putting it in the hands of workers."

Which brings me to the final entry in the lexicon.

Hoperoots. Sample sentence: "It's time to stop waiting for hope to be handed down, and start pushing it up, from the hoperoots." ■

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Wild About Harry

Taking a cue from FDR's WPA, Britain launches the New Deal of the Mind.

by D.D. GUTTENPLAN

London

While leaders on both sides of the Atlantic do their best to channel the spirit of Franklin Delano Roosevelt—bailing out banks, proposing massive public works projects, even promising mortgage relief for financially troubled homeowners—a March 24 gathering at 11 Downing Street brought together Britain's political and cultural establishments to learn about the legacy of a lesser-known figure of the New Deal: Harry Hopkins. An Iowa-born social worker, Hopkins headed FDR's Works Progress Administration (WPA). "Give a man a dole, and you save his body and destroy his spirit," he famously observed. "Give him a job…and you save both the body and the spirit."

Beginning in April 1935, long after FDR's first hundred days had run their course without putting much of a dent in unemployment levels, the WPA lifted more than 8 million Americans off the relief rolls and into work. WPA workers built schools, parks, post offices, zoos, even golf courses, as well as airports, highways and dams. Tucked away in Roosevelt's executive order establishing the agency was a provision for "small useful projects designed to assure a maximum of employment." From such modest beginnings was born Federal One, the WPA arts program comprising the Federal Writers' Project as well as projects in music, theater and the visual arts. A tiny fraction of WPA spending, at any one time the arts program never employed more than 45,000 people, of whom fewer than 7,000 worked on the Writers' Project. With alumni who include Nelson Algren, Arna Bontemps, John Cheever, Ralph Ellison, Martha Gellhorn, Zora Neale Hurston, Kenneth Rexroth, Richard Wright, Studs Terkel and an unknown, unpublished, out-of-work Chicagoan named Saul Bellow, it is hard to argue that the money wasn't well spent.

Still, the WPA might seem like an unlikely source of inspiration for Britain, which after all boasts not only a welfare state that puts America's social safety net to shame but a thriving and long-established government-funded arts sector that includes the National Theatre, the BBC, the British Museum and a superb network of regional museums, opera companies, galleries and theaters. With annual government support of nearly £600 million (about $878 million), the British could be forgiven for thinking they had nothing to learn from America, where funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) peaked at just $176 million in 1992 and has been in decline ever since and where every dollar of federal support for the arts prompts bitter opposition.

The Downing Street meeting marked the launch of the New Deal of the Mind, the brainchild of journalist Martin Bright, who in a January 15 article in *New Statesman* argued that by putting all their emphasis on rescuing banks and big, long-term infrastructure projects, the British were missing out on one of the few undisputed successes of the New Deal, the arts programs. "If ministers have decided to go down the route of work creation backed by borrowing," urged Bright, "they should at least do it with some imagination and flair."

I was there in my capacity as the biographer of I.F. Stone,

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who was described by the conference organizers, oddly if accurately, as "a prominent evangelist for the New Deal"—and because I've been a fan of the Federal Writers' Project since stumbling upon the astonishing *The WPA Guide to New York City* deep in the Random House basement more than twenty-five years ago. The keynote speaker was Alan Brinkley, author of *Voices of Protest* and *Liberalism and Its Discontents* and the provost of Columbia University, who gave an eloquent résumé of the New Deal's cultural ambitions and limitations. Then your correspondent followed up with a few points aimed at translating the language of 1930s America for contemporary Britain. I also reminded the audience that the original WPA's considerable British fan base included Alistair Cooke, who collected every state guidebook, and W.H. Auden, who wrote that "the Arts Project of the WPA was perhaps one of the noblest…undertakings ever attempted by a state."

But far more striking than anything Brinkley or I said was the sheer cultural leverage of the assembled audience, who included the chief executives of the BBC, the Royal Opera House, the British Council, the Arts Council, the Southbank Centre and the Heritage Lottery Fund, as well as the ministers of Culture and Work and Pensions, MPs from the Tories and the Liberal Democrats, not to mention Alistair Darling, the chancellor of the exchequer, who with his wife, Maggie, acted as our hosts. That these people, many of whom control budgets larger than the entire NEA, were prepared to spend a big chunk of time listening to a history lesson—an American history lesson at that—was evidence of just how seriously Britain takes its culture industries. (Anyone tempted to denigrate culture's contribution to Britain's balance of payments would have quickly been set straight by Tessa Ross, who as head of Channel 4's film division greenlighted *Slumdog Millionaire*.)

Projects like the New Deal of the Mind have been floated in the United States—recently by Charles Peters, intellectual godfather to a generation of policy wonks, and Timothy Noah. Writing in *Slate*, they argued that in modeling his stimulus bill on the New Deal's Public Works Administration (PWA), led by FDR's secretary of the interior, Harold Ickes, Obama chose "the wrong Harry." Ickes, they write, "was so fearful that the PWA would appropriate funds to an unworthy or scandalous project that he dotted every I and crossed every T before spending a nickel"—a fair description not just of the current US administration's cautious approach but of that of many ministers in Gordon Brown's government. Indeed, we had barely left Downing Street when the Bank of England warned against new spending initiatives, and although Brown joined Obama's call for stimulus spending at the London G-20, the idea is controversial here.

So it has been striking to see how, in little more than a month, a lone journalist's trial balloon has commandeered not just a respectful hearing but office space and a web presence (courtesy of London's University of the Arts), a start-up budget (thanks to Counterpoint, the think tank of the British Council) and the promise of real money from Trevor Phillips, the Equality and Human Rights Commission chair. Oral histories of Britain's new migrant communities, a service matching empty buildings with aspiring artists and inventors, and a scheme to help unemployed journalists from Britain's dying regional newspapers use their expertise and local knowledge to build strong community-reporting websites were just a few of the ideas proposed.

What, you may well ask, does the WPA have to do with equality and human rights? Well, for one thing, 40 percent of the workers on the Writers' Project were women. And that was back when Betty Friedan was writing editorials for the Smith College newspaper. Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden were alumni of the visual arts project—as were Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. In an era when virtually all US government institutions, from the armed forces to the blood banks, were segregated by race, the WPA arts projects were unique in the degree of integration and the opportunities they offered African-American professionals. It was the WPA that taught a generation of Americans that culture is not something that you go out and buy, or passively consume, but something that is made by and belongs to people like themselves. It would be ironic if this lesson, which still seems capable of stirring such avid interest in Britain, remains neglected in the country that gave it birth.

D.D. Guttenplan writes from The Nation*'s London bureau.* American Radical: The Life and Times of I.F. Stone *will be published in June.*

The Creativity Stimulus

Creating jobs for artists is good for the economy and even better for the imagination.

by JEFF CHANG

On inauguration day, Tom Brokaw was moved to compare Barack Obama's election to Czechoslovakia's 1989 Velvet Revolution. At the eye of each storm, of course, was an icon who merged the political and the aesthetic—Václav Havel, the rock-star poet and prophet, and Barack Obama, the post-soul master of his own story. Both struck down eras of monocultural repression with their pens.

Artists played a largely unheralded role in Obama's victory. But they had been tugging the national unconscious forward for decades, from the multiculturalist avant-gardes of the 1970s and '80s to the hip-hop rebels of the '90s and 2000s, plying a fearless, sometimes even unruly kind of polyculturalism. By the final months of the election season, these artists had secured Obama as the waking image of change.

Every moment of major social change requires a collective leap of imagination. Political transformation must be accompanied not just by spontaneous and organized expressions of unrest and risk but by an explosion of mass creativity. Little wonder that two of the most maligned jobs during the forty years after Richard Nixon's 1968 election sealed the backlash of the "silent majority" were community organizer and artist.

Obama was both. So why haven't community organizers and artists been offered a greater role in the national recovery?

During the transition, arts advocates floated some big ideas—including the creation of an arts corps to bring young artists into underfunded schools, the expansion of unemploy-

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ment support and job retraining to people working in creative industries and the appointment of a senior-level "arts czar" in the administration. But in practice, they faced the wreckage left by a nearly three-decade culture war.

In January they lobbied for $50 million for the NEA in the stimulus package and prevailed over Republican opposition. The one-time allocation will preserve more than 14,000 jobs, allow for new stimulus grants and leverage hundreds of millions more in private support for the arts. Two million Americans list "artist" as their primary occupation. Nearly 6 million workers are employed in the nonprofit arts-and-culture complex. In the words of the NEA's Patrice Walker Powell, the stimulus vote finally "dignified [them] as part of the American workforce."

The victory reflects how notions of the value of creativity have changed. During the past decade, discussions advanced beyond the dead-end debates about the limits of government-funded free expression. Boom-era theorists like Richard Florida and Elizabeth Currid, not to mention Hollywood bulls like Darren Star (*Sex and the City*) and Doug Ellin (*Entourage*), helped make creatives sexy again. Groups like the US Conference of Mayors dreamed not just of expanding cultural tourism or fostering postindustrial innovation but of attracting new chai latte–sipping bourgeois into decaying parts of town. The economic value of creativity was so firmly established by the mid-'90s that it helped drive the ravenous appetite for global corporate consolidation once the Clinton administration began sweeping aside ownership caps and deregulating markets.

For decades, the de facto policy has been to confuse the culture industry with the source of creativity and largely to abandon the production, promotion, distribution and enjoyment of arts and culture to the dictates of the boom/bust marketplace. The result has been the spread of "lifestyle economies" that are merely new forms of monoculturalism and the rise of an environment increasingly antithetical to creativity. A wave of deregulation in the culture industry has consolidated distribution channels and destroyed local scenes, locked away sources of inspiration behind fences of "rights management" and copyright and favored a "blockbuster or die" approach that raises barriers to entry and creates diseconomies of scale. Call it the privatization of the imagination.

So it is important to restate the case for public funding of culture. President Obama recently signed into law a $155 million budget for the NEA. He has also created a White House position on culture and the arts and has tapped Kareem Dale, a Chicago lawyer who worked on his campaign. Some advocates believe this may signal an executive shift away from a culture-war footing and toward a higher level of presidential engagement in creativity policy.

Still, Dale will be no arts czar. Along with his arts and culture duties he will be juggling responsibilities regarding disability policy previously assigned by the president. And the NEA funding is still less than New Zealand's culture budget. Even adding in a $155 million allocation to the National Endowment for the Humanities, we still have nothing resembling a national commitment to creativity.

What we might call "the creativity stimulus" goes far beyond

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job creation and even economic development. Culture is not just something conservatives wage war on. The arts are not just something liberals dress up for on weekends. Creativity can be a powerful form of organizing communities from the bottom up. The economic crisis gives us a chance to rethink the role of creativity in making a vibrant economy and civil society. Artists as well as community organizers cultivate new forms of knowledge and consciousness. One of the unsung stories of the past twenty-five years is how both have used creativity to inspire community development and renewal. Creativity has become the glue of social cohesion in times of turmoil.

In Detroit the James and Grace Lee Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership, built around the inimitable 93-year-old woman who gives the center its name, has served as a home for some of the city's sharpest young organizers and artists, in its Detroit Summer program. One of them, the acclaimed rapper Invincible, has produced an eleven-minute video for her song "Locusts." It serves not just as a fine documentary of the center's work against gentrification and displacement or a profound meditation on the Motortown's past but also as a defiant middle finger in the face of pessimists like Florida, who all but wrote off Detroit in a recent *Atlantic Monthly* cover story.

Obama's green-jobs-for-youth proposal emerged first from Oakland's Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, where staffers tried to figure out how to make the environmental movement pay attention to the hip-hop youths coming into the center. On the other side of Oakland, the Eastside Arts Alliance helped revitalize the troubled city's International District by serving as a haven for socially conscious artists, organizers and intellectuals, bringing together leaders of the Black Arts Movement with those of the hip-hop movement.

Deeply rooted in the communities that made Obama's victory possible, these centers understand their work as transformational. Their communities are the most vulnerable to assaults on creativity, but they are also incubators of the most innovative ideas and movements of our time. This "creative communities" approach has created a vigorous and vital alternative to neoliberal and neoconservative versions of change.

Cross-generational dialogues have begun between older activists inspired by the examples of 1930s WPA arts projects and 1970s CETA cultural development programs and the post-NEA-meltdown do-it-yourselfers raised on the independent ethics and aesthetics of hip-hop and punk. Such discussions could help shape a framework for a cultural policy that focuses on the de-monopolization and reregulation of the culture industry, preserves national arts legacies, restores and upholds localism, aligns corporate interests with individual expression, promotes a radical spirit of diversity and unshackles creativity to rebuild communities and the national economy.

A creativity stimulus policy might follow the example of the distinguished tenure of Brazil's former culture minister, Gilberto Gil. The famed musician's art collided with the repressive dictatorship, and he was temporarily exiled in the late '60s. More recently, his desire to rerelease three of his most famous songs under a Creative Commons license—songs he said celebrated "the idea of the permanent transformation of everything that exists, of the uninterrupted remaking that produces culture, life and the world"—was thwarted by the publisher and owner of his songs, Warner/Chappell Music.

In 2003, in his first speech as culture minister, Gil stated that he wanted to forge "the opening of territory for creativity and new popular languages," ensure "the availability of space for adventure and daring" and secure "the space of memory and invention." Our urgent task is not just to repair the present but to recover the past and sow the future. When we are committed to advancing creativity, we will free these trailblazers to write the new narratives of America.

Jeff Chang, a 2008 USA Ford Fellow in Literature, is the author of Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation. *He is at work on* Who We Be: The Colorization of America, *on the cultural implications of the new American majority.*

Dixieland Blues

Southern governors' hardhearted resistance to the federal stimulus package has deep roots.

by KATHERINE NEWMAN AND ROURKE O'BRIEN

Governors across the country are clamoring for a piece of the stimulus, eager to avoid laying off state employees, hoping to put their unemployed citizens back to work and trying to avoid widespread furloughs as budgets bleed red ink. They know that their citizens want to keep libraries open, teachers in the classroom, cops on the beat and firefighters ready to protect people and property.

Katherine Newman and Rourke O'Brien are sociologists at Princeton University and the authors of a book in progress about the impact of tax policy on the Southern poor, from the Civil War to the present.

Except in the South. Southern governors—Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, Mark Sanford of South Carolina, Haley Barbour of Mississippi—have been pressing the case that the federal stimulus bill is a mistake; they argue the emerging Republican orthodoxy that tax cuts are the only effective way to pull the country out of an economic black hole.

With 11 percent unemployment, South Carolina trails only hard-hit Michigan. Nonetheless, Governor Sanford plans to reject funds that would extend unemployment insurance, not to mention federal fiscal stabilization monies slated for schools and public safety, unless he receives assurance that he

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may use it instead to pay down the state's debt. As ProPublica reports, the state is about to lay off teachers in large numbers as a consequence.

Not to be outdone, Jindal—who, like Sanford, is being eyed as an early contender for the 2012 GOP nomination—has announced plans to reject the unemployment money and $9.5 million in Medicaid funds that would cover health insurance for the recently unemployed in his state.

With the exception of Florida's Charlie Crist, who joined President Obama in pushing for the stimulus package, the Southern governors are campaigning against their poorest citizens on the grounds that when the federal money runs out, they will be forced to raise local taxes.

Of course, these pronouncements are mostly bluster. Jindal is willing to accept $3.7 billion of the $3.8 billion slated for his state, but he steadfastly refuses to take the $98 million on offer to extend unemployment insurance. He and others who share his views seem particularly eager to deny the least fortunate of their own states the help they desperately need as the job market melts down around their ankles.

Ideologically driven crusades against the New Deal have left their traces in the economic profile of the Southern states.

This hardhearted pattern is not new. It is a replay of the Southern rejection of Roosevelt's New Deal. During the bleak years of the Depression, politicians below the Mason-Dixon line refused to provide relief to the poor and rebelled against federal intrusion into social policy. When most state governments were hemorrhaging, local and state governments across the South actually ran surpluses. How? They fired government workers and slashed funds for education and healthcare.

New Orleans, Jindal's pride and joy, ranked last among the nation's thirty-one largest metropolitan areas in the amount spent on relief in 1932—and was proud of it. It was the only city that made no provision for family welfare and offered no aid for needy mothers. Historian Roger Biles has pointed out that at the same time, the city council gave $10,000 (an enormous sum then) to the Chamber of Commerce to advertise nationally that the Big Easy was the "home of cheap and docile labor."

As FDR pressed the states to join the federal government in providing for the millions who were unemployed, many politicians across the South said they couldn't—or wouldn't—do more for the indigent. Instead, governors accepted funds from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration while cutting the relief rolls or slashing the benefits provided to their most vulnerable citizens. Southern representatives in Congress abetted the governors and were so good at it that by 1939 the region had received only one-sixth of the federal dollars spent in the major New Deal programs, even though they had a quarter of the population. Southerners in Congress also fought for state power to determine who gets benefits and at what level—resulting in tremendous regional variations in the adequacy of public assistance that continue today.

These ideologically driven crusades are not merely historical artifacts. They have left their traces in the economic profile of the Southern states, which contain some of the poorest and least developed regions of the country. We hear a lot about Atlanta and Nashville, but the small-town and rural areas of the Deep South bear more resemblance to a Third World country than we like to acknowledge. That is owing to decades (and even centuries) of allergic reactions to the taxation required to fund the human capital every state needs for quality public school systems, hospitals, colleges and universities.

Politicians who refuse to raise business or property taxes are adding to the thin quality of the region's public sector and have burdened the poor even more because the only instruments left for raising revenue are the most regressive consumption taxes. In Alabama today, an essential fiscal building block for municipal and state government is a highly regressive food tax (in excess of 10 percent in some localities), which makes the most basic commodities more expensive for the people who can least afford them.

This is about more than basic equity: it hurts the South at the bottom line of workforce productivity and health, which fuels inequality. Southern states continue to post some of the nation's lowest rates of high school graduation as well as the lowest life expectancy—children born in Mississippi and Louisiana can expect to die five years sooner than those born in Massachusetts.

These social facts leave the Southern states poorly equipped to attract high-skilled, high-wage industry, and that, in turn, limits the tax base to support a modern infrastructure. Hence, unlike other regions of the country, the states of the Deep South have a hard time raising funds—even when they want to, which is not often—to match federal investments in education or poverty alleviation. The comparative advantage the Southern states offer to industry is mainly a low-wage labor force. And while that has helped to keep unemployment lower than in many other regions, it also swells the ranks of the working poor.

The history of the Great Depression in the Deep South has led directly to the problems we see in these states today. Since they are home to more than 25 percent of the nation's poor, and nearly 5 million of our poor children, what happens in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Texas matters to the rest of the country. FDR spoke of the "millstone" the region represented in his day and moved to create the Tennessee Valley Authority to bring electricity to rural hamlets so that they could join the twentieth century. The region, more than any other part of the country, needs that kind of farsighted investment, but instead it is treated to the shortsighted policies of the Southern politicians of the past.

Its people deserve better. Indeed, they deserve to be spared the jockeying of presidential contenders like Sarah Palin, who crows about rejecting more federal funds than any of her Southern rivals (45 percent of the funds that could come to Alaska will be turned back if the governor has her way). Playing politics at a time when millions are feeling the brunt of this recession is inexcusable—but it's also nothing new. ■

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Dr. Mark Whittle is Professor of Astronomy at the University of Virginia, where he has taught for over 20 years. He earned his M.A. in Physics at Oxford University and his Ph.D. in Astronomy at the University of Cambridge. Professor Whittle is the author of more than 80 research articles.

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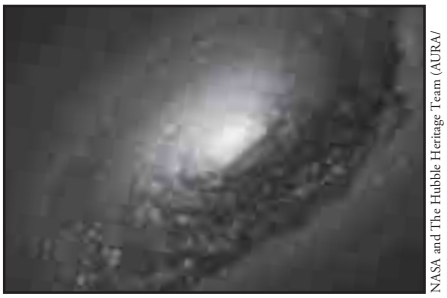

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Can China Catch a Cool Breeze?

The future of the warming planet depends largely on the fate of China's nascent wind sector.

by CHRISTIAN PARENTI

On a range of seaside mountains between Shenzhen and Hong Kong, two visions of China's future development stand side by side. The slope of the mountains is busy with construction workers building roads and swank modern trophy homes, each with a two-car garage. The valley below is carpeted with acres of bright green chemical-fed golf courses, their sand traps winking up in playful floral patterns. This is the future as California-style, auto-based sprawl.

On the ridgeline above this stands the other vision: four tall wind turbines face the South China Sea, receiving the steady ocean breeze. The turbines of the Da Mei Sha wind farm are part of the country's rapidly rising renewable energy sector. This small wind farm represents an alternate future: that of China as a green technology giant.

The People's Republic of China faces two problems that could be addressed with one solution.

The global economic crisis has hit China hard. The country's exports and Gross Domestic Product growth have dropped dramatically; over the past year tens of thousands of factories have closed, and an estimated 20 million workers have lost their jobs. Social unrest is growing, and many fear it could spin out of control. In the face of that, China must boost its internal investment and consumption. In other words, China, which exports much of its savings, must absorb more of the surplus it generates—it must stimulate its own economy. The Chinese government's $585 billion stimulus package, announced in November and dedicated mostly to infrastructure, is an attempt to do just that. A second, equally massive intervention may be on the way soon.

At the same time, China faces an array of interconnected environmental crises. Foremost among them is air pollution caused by heavy use of coal. For the unconditioned foreigner (such as your reporter) who shows up in the leaden, acrid filth of an overcast day in Beijing or Chonqing, the physical effects can be immediate headaches, nausea and disorientation. Even much of rural China is choked by this poisonous, soot-laden air. Coal pollution is estimated to cost China at least 7 percent of its GDP annually in lost productivity. A recent Pew survey in China found that more than 70 percent of respondents said air quality was a serious problem; water quality is seen as equally dire.

Desertification and severe water shortages are beginning and will get worse as Himalayan glaciers disappear and rainfall is disrupted by climate change. Later this century, a rise in sea level is predicted to inundate many coastal cities and much of the country's industrial base.

PETER O. ZIERLEIN

The mountainside sprawl, repeated in variations all over China, might work to stimulate the economy. But environmentally it will bring disaster. On the other hand, retooling the energy system—à la the windmills—could solve both problems by radically reducing the country's carbon emissions while stimulating the economy.

It's not an overstatement to say that the fate of the world depends on which path China chooses. Emissions of atmospheric carbon dioxide have surged 370 percent in China since 1980; energy consumption has grown faster than the country's economy as a whole; China just surpassed the United States as the world's largest greenhouse gas polluter; and in twenty-five years it will emit more carbon dioxide than the rest of the industrialized world combined. If that happens, atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide will permanently overshoot the threshold of 350 parts per million, a level that climate scientists say we must return to if we are to avoid catastrophic, self-reinforcing, runaway climate change. (Current concentrations are 388 ppm.)

Not long ago, Chinese leaders refused to confront the environmental crisis, claiming that renewable energy was too expensive. They argued that because most accumulated atmospheric carbon dioxide emissions were produced by the indus-

Christian Parenti, a Nation *contributing editor and visiting scholar at the CUNY Graduate Center, is at work on a book about climate change and war.* *Research support for this article was provided by the Puffin Foundation Investigative Fund at The Nation Institute.*

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trialization of the United States and Europe, it is therefore unfair to expect China to sacrifice its economic growth to solve a problem created by others. This argument may be historically "correct," but it is also suicidal: runaway climate change will not exempt China or anyone else.

Recently, however, China has begun to embrace renewable energy. And it is clear that the economics of renewable energy make sense. Wind farms, in particular, involve considerable economic benefits like rapid growth, job creation, technological links to the rest of the economy and lots of profits. Solar, hydro and biomass are also being invested in, but wind power is the most robust of China's renewables.

"The wind sector in China is growing extremely fast," says Trevor Houser, an energy analyst and visiting fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. "The challenge now is to devise policies that can keep this going for the long term."

China built its first wind farm in 1986, after some engineers visited the United States, saw West Coast wind farms and bought a few turbines. For the next decade and a half, wind development moved very slowly, but the pace picked up during the tenth Five-Year Plan, which began in 2001. By 2005, China had built fifty-nine wind farms, with an installed capacity of 1.2 gigawatts, making it the world's eighth-largest producer of wind power.

Today China is the fourth-largest producer of wind power, its installed capacity having increased by more than 800 percent in four years. Capacity is expected to double again, to 20 gigawatts, in two years. The government's goal for 2020 is to meet 15 percent of its energy needs with renewables, and wind will be a big part of that. But a recent Greenpeace study was even more optimistic, arguing that China could build 122 gigawatts of wind capacity by 2020. That would be the equivalent of five Three Gorges Dams or a score of nuke plants.

How has China achieved this rapid growth of its wind sector? In many ways the story follows the classic trajectory of East Asia's dirigist—that is, state-directed—hothouse industrialization. Far from letting the market do its thing, the state has worked diligently to protect and discipline private businesses involved in the wind sector. Government economic planners view the wind sector as an opportunity to build up high-value-added domestic manufacturing.

China's industrial policies are particularly instructive for those of us in the United States who would like to see our own renewable energy sector grow more robustly. Until very recently the US model, or lack of a model, for wind development has been to leave the work to the private sector. There are no national "portfolio standards," or mandates, requiring utilities to supply a specific amount of energy from carbon-neutral sources; and until the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 there was very little subsidized financing for green energy projects or even a robust use of eminent domain to force wind projects through over the objections of NIMBY landlords.

The main form of government support has been an anemic production tax credit of 1.9 cents per kilowatt-hour. But even this support has been allowed to expire and has been renewed for only one or two years at a time. As a result, our renewable energy sector is hostage to the panicky gyrations of bubble-and-bust cycles of speculation. And with the current downturn, alternative energy projects are starved for capital.

China, on the other hand, has used all the powers at its disposal—regulations, mandates, tax and tariff reductions, and direct subsidies—to nurture and incubate its wind sector. At the heart of the process is the National Development and Reform Commission, China's central government planning body. Most Chinese wind farms start with NDRC research, which locates the asset—namely, the windy land to be developed. The government then portions out pieces of this windy terrain to Chinese firms, some of which are partnered with foreign companies.

Officially, the contracting process uses competitive bidding, but in reality the process is often opaque and not always governed by formal rules. Rather, it is *guanxi*—connections, networks and solidarity—that determines who gets what.

China's industrial policies are instructive for those of us in the US who would like to see our renewable energy sector grow more robustly.

One common loophole has to do with the size of a wind farm. Those farms below 50 megawatts do not require any competitive bidding and can be developed by local governments. "It is pretty common to sees lots of wind farms of 49 megawatts stacked to three and four next to each other," says Joanna Lewis, an assistant professor at Georgetown University and a specialist on the Chinese wind industry.

Once developed, the wind farms are usually sold to local utilities to operate them. Chinese law requires regional utilities to buy all renewable energy at favorable above-market prices. Turbines and generators, the most complicated parts of the wind industry, are increasingly supplied by Chinese firms. China jump-started its turbine production by purchasing technology licenses from European firms. In the early years the government mandated that 40 percent of wind farm components be locally manufactured. That requirement has risen to 70 percent. This forces the best turbine manufacturers—like Denmark's Vestas, Germany's Nordex, Spain's Gamesa and US-based General Electric—to build high-tech factories in China or face exclusion from the booming Chinese market.

"We have seven factories in China," says Lars Andersen president of Vestas China. "We're going to open a turbine factory in Inner Mongolia because of the huge wind resources

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there. The biggest challenge we face now is keeping up with demand."

There are by one count about a dozen major wind turbine and generator manufacturers in China, two of which, Goldwind and Sinovel, are considered to be among the ten biggest in the world. Both are partly state-owned. In the case of Goldwind, the government owns 55 percent. Financing at every stage is marked by state subsidies and low-interest bank loans.

The strategic nature of energy, and perhaps the government's heavy involvement, gives the Chinese wind industry a surprisingly secretive, almost paranoid, culture. Touring wind turbine factories is nearly impossible, and even getting permission to visit wind farms is maddeningly difficult.

Another flow of subsidies comes from abroad through the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Kyoto Protocol famously set carbon reduction targets: most industrialized countries agreed to cut their greenhouse gas emissions 6 percent to 8 percent below 1990 levels by 2012. One of the ways rich economies can meet some of their reduction targets is by paying for green energy projects in poor economies. This North-to-South subsidy scheme is the CDM.

The strategic nature of energy, and the government's heavy involvement, gives the wind industry a secretive, almost paranoid culture.

"In China about 100 percent of wind projects get CDM subsidies," says Joanna Lewis. With almost 300 CDM-registered projects, China accounts for about one-quarter of the program's total capacity, which transfers about $5 billion a year from wealthy industrialized economies to developing economies.

Critics of the Clean Development Mechanism charge that China likely would have developed many of these renewable energy projects even without the subsidy. But experts like Houser and Lewis say that CDM funding has been crucial to jump-starting Chinese wind power. They point to the fact that every major green energy project in China has involved such funding, and that without CDM money it is likely that other capital would be harder to raise.

China's fast-growing wind sector is not without serious problems. Most of the wind resources are in the north and northwest—places like the huge barren deserts of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. The steadily moving air of these far-off steppes needs to be harnessed, but most of the country's population and industrial base is concentrated in the east and southeast. And unfortunately, China's electrical grid is a mess: underdeveloped, overstressed and intentionally decentralized. In fact, China has a patchwork of regional grids that are not yet all connected. This means transmission and distribution—moving power from where it is generated to where it is needed—is inefficient and in some situations even impossible. (The United States faces similar problems: the need for new power lines and a badly fragmented system of ownership and jurisdictional management that makes large-scale, long-term planning difficult, expensive and plagued by litigation.)

In China two state companies own the electric arteries that connect the pieces. The larger of these is called, in the inimitably practical nomenclature of socialism, State Grid. Rebuilding and upgrading the grid has lagged far behind the country's runaway electricity demand and generation capacity. The weakness of the grid became painfully clear this past winter when heavy snows snapped crucial links and plunged much of the nation into freezing, chaotic darkness.

Yet China is stepping up to the challenge of fixing its ragtag transmission network. State Grid has started building long, ultrahigh-voltage direct-current lines. By 2020 there should be fifteen of these massive corridors linking industrial and urban China to its various power sources.

"In the US one major transmission line could take ten years to build, between the financing and planning and legal challenges. But in a command economy like China, they'll do it very quickly," explains Houser.

China is also trying to ease demand. In 2006 it kicked off the world's most aggressive energy-efficiency program, and by 2010 China aims to cut its "energy intensity"—energy consumption per unit of GDP—by 20 percent. This would produce carbon dioxide emissions reduction almost five times greater than the entire European Union is committed to achieve under the Kyoto Protocol. Part of this program involves decommissioning hundreds of smaller, older coal-fired power plants.

Nonetheless, the story of China and climate change is pretty grim. The country is an economic, demographic and political giant that is in many ways falling forward. As long as it catches itself, this looks like progress, but as soon as it stumbles it faces a potentially catastrophic collapse.

The main problem is the dirty black rock. Coal provides about 80 percent of China's electricity, and the country is a net importer of it.

Two years ago, China was building two large coal-fired plants every week, a pace that has since slowed somewhat. One energy analyst explained it this way: "In a good year China adds as much coal-fired capacity as already exists in the whole of the UK. In a slow year they only add the equivalent of California's capacity." A recent Chinese government white paper acknowledged the crisis of climate change but also noted the limited possibilities for change: The "coal-dominated energy mix cannot be substantially changed in the near future, thus making the control of greenhouse gas emissions rather difficult."

The race to escape coal and to avert the worst impacts of carbon emissions is, as of now, feeble, even quixotic: renewable energy is simply not growing fast enough. "Beyond 2020 we could start to see a real paradigm shift; the energy mix could really move away from coal," says Houser, "but not before then." That, unfortunately, is not a time frame that will avert disaster—for China or the world. ■

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Blowback at the Border

How our obsession with drug prohibition and unregulated guns gave us Mexican drug wars.

by PETER SCHRAG

The mounting drug-gang violence along the Mexican border spilling into Tucson, Atlanta and other American cities—the kidnappings, beheadings, torture and street massacres—is as unsurprising as it is ironic. It's also a loud call for a fundamental review of this nation's so-called "war on drugs."

It's unsurprising because Mexican President Felipe Calderón's attempt to assert his authority and please his American neighbors by cracking down on the drug cartels is jeopardizing established supply routes and the cozy arrangements with Mexican drug cops and public officials that in effect stabilized the trade. Now the gangs, which are also seizing a growing segment of the migrant-smuggling business, are at war not just with Mexico's federal cops, the army and the shrinking number of honest prosecutors and judges who try to confront them but with one another for a share of that destabilized market.

It's ironic because Americans, as everybody knows, buy and consume most of the marijuana, cocaine and methamphetamines that make up the lion's share of the cartels' business. Also, some 90 percent of the guns used by drug gangs, including a growing number of military-type assault weapons, come from American gun dealers, most in the border states. And it's American politicians who've been most active in putting the heat on Calderón to stop the drugs. But perhaps most ironic of all, it's the federal prohibition of marijuana, first enacted in large measure because of its association with Mexicans, that created the multibillion-dollar market in which the drug gangs thrive.

Which is to say that the real cause of the drug violence now drawing anxious attention from Congress, the Obama administration and worried state and local law enforcement officials lies on this side of the border.

What's new is that for the first time Washington is beginning to pay attention. At a Senate judiciary subcommittee hearing in March on the violence at the border there was widespread agreement that America deserves a large portion of the blame. At almost the same time, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton acknowledged a shared responsibility. "We know very well," she said during a visit to Mexico, "that the drug traffickers are motivated by the demand for illegal drugs in the United States, that they are armed by the transport of weapons from the United States to Mexico." When President Obama met Calderón recently, drug violence joined immigration at the top of the agenda. The two issues are linked in more ways than even Obama probably knows.

Historians disagree on who or what was the largest influence in persuading Congress to pass the Marijuana Tax Act in 1937, which in effect outlawed marijuana and criminalized its production and sale. Was it newspaper baron William Randolph Hearst, or was it Harry Anslinger, who as head of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics was the nation's first drug czar?

PETER O. ZIERLEIN

Hearst had it in for Mexicans ever since Pancho Villa confiscated some 800,000 acres of his timberland during the Mexican Revolution. But the campaign against "reefer madness" and all the horror stories associated with this "sex crazing drug menace"—killers maddened by marijuana, children seduced and destroyed by dope, field hands so blissed out under the influence that they couldn't do their work—also made great circulation-boosters.

With the end of Prohibition in 1933 and Congressional questions about Narcotics Bureau funding, Anslinger, trying to protect and enlarge his empire, campaigned hard to add marijuana to the list of controlled substances. Busily cranking out testimony, press handouts and articles contending that pot is "as dangerous as a coiled rattlesnake," he became the loudest voice in Washington for marijuana prohibition.

Given the law enforcement disaster alcohol prohibition had become, Congress should have been particularly wary of heading down that road again. But the record of the 1937 House hearings makes clear that Congress never got any sound medical evidence on the dangers of cannabis, and didn't ask for it. When they voted for the law, most members had no idea what marijuana was. But they had heard Anslinger

Peter Schrag, retired editorial page editor and columnist for the Sacramento Bee, *has been writing for* The Nation *for nearly a half-century. His new book,* Not Fit for Our Society: Nativism, Eugenics and Immigration *(University of California Press), will be published next spring.*

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tell them that "its use frequently leads to insanity."

In the context of today's conflicts with Mexico, there may be an even larger irony. For white supremacists like C.M. Goethe, a California millionaire and eugenicist who campaigned relentlessly to have Mexico added to the list of countries from which immigration was severely restricted, linking marijuana to Mexicans proved their racial inferiority and unfitness to become Americans. Marijuana was bad because Mexicans used it; Mexicans were bad because they used marijuana.

The passage of the Marijuana Tax Act effectively locked pot prohibition into federal law. Even in the past decade, as voters in a growing number of states legalized it for medical uses and liberalized other drug laws, federal agents raided medical marijuana dispensaries in California and other states where it was lawful. Barry McCaffrey, President Clinton's drug czar, tried to revoke the narcotics-prescribing licenses of doctors who recommended medical marijuana to their patients, but he was stopped in the courts. In the meantime, growing numbers of Americans, future presidents among them, casually used and continue to use marijuana.

The reform of the draconian Rockefeller drug laws in New York was another illustration of Americans' growing willingness not just to liberalize marijuana use but a range of other drug policies away from prison and punishment toward a greater emphasis on treatment and what drug law reformers call "harm reduction." Given those changing attitudes, driven at least in part by the huge number of voters who have themselves used illegal drugs, the violence at the border ought to be another powerful reason to re-examine the nation's costly, ineffective and ultimately destructive drug policies. If marijuana were treated like alcohol or tobacco, the largest revenue sources of the Mexican gangs would dry up.

Something similar applies to Congress's continuing tolerance of assault weapons. At the Senate hearings in March, Senators Dick Durbin of Illinois and Dianne Feinstein of California made clear that they understood the role of American arms merchants in supplying guns.

But the immediate prospects for restoration of the federal ban on assault weapons that Feinstein had pushed through Congress and whose extension had been throttled by the NRA in 2004 aren't much better than those for drug law reform. The right to bear arms is constitutionally protected, said Senator Jeff Sessions of Alabama at the March hearings. If the Mexican gangs didn't get their guns from the United States, they'd get them elsewhere.

Attorney General Eric Holder says the administration will end federal raids on providers of medical marijuana in the thirteen states that allow it, provided that they violate no state laws. And at least one bill has been filed, by Senator Jim Webb of Virginia, creating a commission to review drug policies. But neither Obama nor most others in Washington seem prepared to begin any sort of comprehensive review of the marijuana laws, much less address drug law reform generally.

As for the drug-gang violence, Obama said in March that he wasn't yet ready to send the National Guard and further militarize the border, as a lot of close-the-border Republicans and talk-radio right-wingers were demanding. So far, he's only sending more agents and hardware to try to check the southward flow of guns and cash and the northward flow of drugs. But that's less than half a solution, which requires the nation, from the president down, to address comprehensive immigration reform, drug law reform and gun control. All are major elements in the border violence; all are crucial if we're going to stop the blowback. We've hardly started on any of them. ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

authors ["Back Talk," March 30]. Frederick Ungar published *American Women Writers: From Colonial Times to the Present in Four Volumes, A Critical Reference Guide*. I have Volume 3, edited by Lina Mainiero and published in 1981.

Judith S. Antrobus

Smallwood Replies

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Elaine Showalter makes the following distinction: "*Jury of Her Peers* is a narrative literary history, covering 350 years in twenty chapters and told by a single author with a point of view. The Ungar volumes, on the other hand, are critical reference guides comprising brief entries on many women writers, written by a range of contributors and arranged alphabetically."

Christine Smallwood

'Old Boy' Network

Los Angeles

I recently ran across Scott Sherman's compelling piece about George Plimpton ["In His League," Feb. 2; "Letters," March 23]. I was fascinated by glimpses of the early *Paris Review*, which by some miracle printed one of my stories. As Sherman says, Peter Matthiessen's CIA link was an open secret. He and George came from the social class most desired by Langley before it was Langley. A college friend who worked for the CIA was called in to speak to the director because it was discovered that her family contained a bunch of reds. "Are you going to fire me?" she asked. "Of course not," replied the director. "We're not like those apes over at the FBI."

I knew and liked George and don't believe he was a man without qualities or disguised an empty suit. He did the best with what he had, which was physical courage, irony, courtesy and considerable literary talent. He was our Gatsby, in a way. I loved it when he called me "old boy." Simple good manners should not be undervalued. Also, in so many ways he was in the best sense a Citizen of New York.

Clancy Sigal

Wrong Country, Wrong Number

Tony Kushner and Alisa Solomon stated in their April 13 article on *Tell Her the Truth* that the play was being staged "across the United States" and listed Cambridge as one of the cities. To the disappointment of Boston-area readers, the play was staged in Cambridge, England.

Katha Pollitt, in her March 23 "Subject to Debate" column, gave $800,000 as twenty times the US median household income. It is sixteen times that income.

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Books & the Arts.

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Purported portraits of the Bard on display as part of "Searching for Shakespeare," a 2006 exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in London

This Small Extravagance

by JAMES LONGENBACH

Artists' lives are not automatically interesting. However wild the nights, an artist's days are dominated by solitary devotion to the medium: the texture of paint, the measure of syllables. Without that devotion, an artist will have no life as an artist. Along with it, an artist may engage in activities whose subsequent availability to storytelling is far more immediate. Arthur Rimbaud had an affair with Paul Verlaine. Virginia Woolf drowned herself in the Ouse. The Renaissance playwright Christopher Marlowe, who also worked as a government agent, was stabbed to death with a twelve-penny dagger. But such stories, however fascinating, do not tell us what we really want to know—how and why *A Season in Hell*, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *Tamburlaine* got written.

About Marlowe's exact contemporary, a man christened on April 26, 1564, as Gulielmus filius Johannes Shakspere (William, son of John Shakespeare), we know almost nothing. We do not know his date of birth. We cannot be sure how many plays he wrote, and neither do we know precisely when he wrote the plays that have been preserved. When multiple versions of his plays have come down to us, we cannot know for certain which version is authoritative. Shakespeare may have been a cuckold, a homosexual or a secret Catholic during a time when Catholics were persecuted in England. But the evidence for such conjectures ranges from slim to implausible. Far less precarious is the presumption that, like Rimbaud or Woolf, Shakespeare spent long, unglamorous hours devoting himself to the measure of syllables. As George Bernard Shaw said a century ago, "everything we know about Shakespeare can be got into a half-hour sketch."

Understandably, we want more than that. We want to know how and why *Twelfth Night*, *King Lear* and *The Tempest* got written. We want to know about every imaginable ingredient—social, aesthetic, psychological, physical—that was distilled into this artist's passionate but inauspicious devotion to his medium, a devotion so intense that it permanently altered the medium. Shakespeare coined the word "inauspicious," riffing on the Latin *auspicium*, the art of telling the future by observing the flights of birds: "And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars." Finally, whether we're fascinated by an artist about whom we know a lot or a little, an artist whose exterior life was brilliant or boring, we want a biography of the mind. In *Soul of the Age: A Biography of the Mind of William Shakespeare*, the British scholar and literary critic Jonathan Bate has set himself this challenge.

Soul of the Age
A Biography of the Mind of William Shakespeare.
By Jonathan Bate.
Random House. 471 pp. $35.

What does a biography of the mind feel like? Although Woolf's exterior life was plenty interesting and fully documented, the best biographies of Woolf (such as those by Lyndall Gordon and Hermione Lee) read like biographies of her mind, accounts of how and why she wrote the books that made her interesting to us in the first place. This is because Woolf's inner life was as meticulously preserved as her social life; a biographer has access not only to her voluminous letters and diaries but to the intricate and multiple drafts of her novels, manuscripts that help us imagine her devotion to her medium. A biographer of Keats has less to go on, but lives of Keats still feel like biographies of the mind. So do the best lives of Dr. Johnson.

Earlier than that, the going gets rougher and rougher. We know what Milton thought about a lot of things—divorce, the Trinity, king-killing, blindness—but we don't know what Shakespeare thought about anything. The quality of any biography has as much to do with the tact and ingenuity of the biographer as with the available material, but as the

James Longenbach's most recent books are Draft of a Letter, *a collection of poems, and* The Art of the Poetic Line, *essays on poetry.*

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quantity and (even more important) the quality of the material recedes, a biographer requires the tact and ingenuity of an artist, especially if the goal is to narrate the inner rather than the exterior life.

Jonathan Bate has written brilliant literary criticism about Shakespeare's plays and poems; his *Shakespeare and Ovid* is, in addition to being what its title suggests it is, one of the canniest books ever written about Shakespeare's imaginative power. But Bate possesses neither the imaginative power nor the writerly craft essential to the extraordinary challenge he has set himself in *Soul of the Age*. To say so is not stern criticism. I'm not sure that anyone could meet that challenge, and part of what's perplexing about *Soul of the Age* is Bate's desire to bury his brilliance beneath a project so blindly ambitious, so wholly incapable of being realized, that it is destined to dissatisfy.

When narrating an inner life, a biographer often requires the tact and ingenuity of an artist.

Soul of the Age is not organized as a narrative. Instead, the book is divided into seven large categories of human experience, categories borrowed from Jacques's famous speech in *As You Like It* ("All the world's a stage") about the seven ages of man: Infant, Schoolboy, Lover, Soldier, Justice, Pantaloon, Oblivion. Each of these seven categories is divided into several chapters, and most of the chapters comprise a series of very brief analyses of a particular facet of Shakespeare's life and work: the fact that Shakespeare's father oversaw the whitewashing of the frescoes in the Stratford-upon-Avon Gild Chapel, for instance, or the likelihood that Shakespeare learned his Latin from William Lily's *Short Introduction of Grammar*. Connections between these juxtaposed fragments of analysis, some brilliant, some dull, are left mostly implicit. And chronology does not govern the progression of the fragments: for instance, an uncharacteristically lengthy analysis of *The Tempest* (the last play Shakespeare wrote without a collaborator) appears in the section on Shakespeare the Schoolboy, since the play has to do with learning of many varieties.

The brilliance of any particular swatch of analysis is due to the manner in which a very large world is seduced from strategically meager evidence; the dullness of too many other swatches seems to be driven merely by the need to flesh out the seven-part schema, regardless of the availability of useful material or compelling argument. Bate says that his method avoids "the deadening march of chronological sequence that is biography's besetting vice," and while that may be true, every method's strength is potentially its weakness. The architecture of *Soul of the Age* is so atomized, its component parts so brief and so disparate, that the cumulative experience of the book is like reading hundreds of pages of haiku—exhausting, no matter how bright the occasional gem. "I like to think that Shakespeare would have adopted a similar procedure if he had been commissioned to write his own biography," says Bate. This seems to me unimaginable.

Bate's narcissism, explicit in this statement, is elsewhere implicit—as perhaps it must be, given the scope and ambition of his project. A similar hubris infects *Will in the World*, Stephen Greenblatt's recent account of the dialectical relationships between Shakespeare's life, work and times. Like Bate, Greenblatt notices that Shakespeare's father, acting as chamberlain in Stratford-upon-Avon, oversaw the "reparations" of the Gild Chapel—meaning that its medieval frescoes were whitewashed in accordance with the new Protestant regime. Then, through a sequence of insinuations too intricate to describe, Greenblatt proposes that John Shakespeare remained, despite his official duties, a Roman Catholic. The proposition leads to a question: "Did John Shakespeare's eldest son know the truth?" This question breeds another: "Could he have been sure which was the 'real' father?" The second question provokes a supposition: "He might have sensed that his father was playing a part." The suppositions multiply: "He might have overheard whispered arguments between his father and mother and observed furtive acts." And the suppositions are crowned with an observation that is, in itself, undeniably true: "Shakespeare's plays provide ample evidence for doubleness."

However outlandish the argument, Greenblatt's book is a pleasure to read—in part because of the outlandishness. His webs are spun on the grandest scale, stretched suspensefully over many pages of extended observation and analysis. Reading them, one feels one's resistance to the method overwhelmed by the ingenuity of the argument and the sheer delight of vividly rendered detail. The power of the book lies in the almost absurdly sustained length of its game of "what if," a game that any artist would have to admire.

To say that the design of Bate's book undermines the possibility of such pleasure is not simply to dress up preference as judgment. Throughout the long section on Shakespeare the Lover, a topic that inevitably invites the most prurient kind of speculation, Bate takes pains to squelch any urge to play "what if." Discussing Shakespeare's sonnets, he scorns the effort to identify the young man to whom the early sonnets are addressed or the dark lady who invades the later sonnets. "It may be granted that we would be on fairly safe ground in assuming that Shakespeare's 'dark lady' is not an allegorical representation of King's College Cambridge," says Bate with clarifying hyperbole, "but we cannot rule out the possibility that she is not so much a real person as an embodiment of Venus. Or that she is Shakespeare's conceit and portends nothing beyond her reality in the text itself."

This prudence is justified, but it stands curiously at odds with sentences like this one: "I have an instinctive sense that the wooer whom Shakespeare most resembles is Bassanio in *The Merchant of Venice*." There's no evidence for such speculation, and without the amplitude of Greenblatt's argumentative extravagance, this small extravagance falls flat. "We must tread carefully here," cautions Bate in a discussion of Shakespeare and venereal disease, but his brief discussion culminates in this admonition: "we cannot rule out the possibility that [Shakespeare] became infected himself. King Lear's disgust at his daughters does seem a little overfixated on the female genitals as the source of universal corruption and damnation." But might not King Lear, like the dark lady of the sonnets, portend nothing beyond his reality in the text? Must his sexual disgust be Shakespeare's?

Listen to the end of Lear's speech about female sexuality:

> Down from the waist
> They are centaurs, though women
> all above:
> But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
> Beneath is all the fiends':
> There's hell, there's darkness, there
> is the sulphurous pit: burning,
> scalding, stench, consumption.
> Fie, fie, fie! Pah, pah!

"Lear's disgust," says Bate of this passage, "is such that in the final lines he cannot maintain the equilibrium of his iambic pentameter

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verse—the speech collapses into prose." And the implication is that Shakespeare, the maker of those pentameters, was similarly overcome. But while the final lines of this speech are set down as prose in the 1623 folio text of *King Lear*, they are set as iambic pentameter lines in the 1608 quarto text. Two compositors set the language down in different ways, and we have no way of knowing which version is correct (if either of them is) or if Shakespeare preferred one version to the other. Bate's argument about the psychological ramifications of a poet's formal choices would seem corny even if we could be certain that Shakespeare wanted the passage to degenerate into prose.

At moments such as these, Bate seems like the victim of his book's organization. Later, in a brief discussion of Shakespeare's relationship to Stoic philosophy, he discusses *King Lear* again, forcing himself to admit that "Lear's words may not, after all, come from some personal disgust at women on Shakespeare's part." But if that's the case, why offer the slapdash biographical argument at all? It's as if Bate, having made a few interesting observations about sexuality and venereal disease, feels that he has only another ten seconds to finish this bit of analysis before charging on to the next: the rush forces him into an unimaginative sort of analysis that he elsewhere disdains.

"Where are the truly happy marriages in Shakespeare?" he asks. That's a provocative question, one worth pondering, but there's no time for pondering, so Bate simply points to a well-known passage in *Coriolanus* in which the character Aufidius admits that he takes more pleasure in dreaming of wrestling with Coriolanus than he took on his wedding night:

> But that I see thee here,
> Thou noble thing, more dances my rapt heart
> Than when I first my wedded mistress saw
> Bestride my threshold…thou hast beat me out
> Twelve several times, and I have nightly since
> Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me:
> We have been down together in my sleep,
> Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,
> And waked half dead with nothing.

"The imagery here is, to say the least, suggestive," says Bate. End of section. Time to move on. The dark lady of the sonnets may be nothing but Shakespeare's imaginative confection, but if a man is capable of imagining homoerotic desire, then, well, you know, that's suggestive.

Soul of the Age is a frustrating book, not simply because it contains these swatches of lackluster argument but because one feels that it didn't need to. For when Bate is good, he is very good. Discussing Shakespeare the Soldier, he offers a fascinating and intricately developed account of the Essex Rebellion (a botched uprising against Elizabeth I's government), debunking the long-treasured notion that Elizabeth was referring to Shakespeare's play when she said, "I am Richard II." Discussing Shakespeare the Schoolboy, he notes that the speech from *As You Like It* about the seven ages of man is based closely on a passage from a poem by Marcellus Palingenius; then he offers these acute comments on Shakespeare's originality:

> Often when we think Shakespeare is being original, he is actually voicing the commonplace thoughts of his age. Where he was unique was in the vigor and invention with which he turned traditional "themes" into living drama. He took Palingenius's hint of linking the succession of ages to the metaphor of life as a play. But he was the first to prove the truth of the metaphor by including the discourse within a play as opposed to a treatise or sermon. He was also the first to assign particular dramatic parts to each age. In all versions, the infant cries. Only in Shakespeare's does it do anything so theatrical as puke—indeed, no writer had ever used the word puke as a verb before.... Instinctively, Shakespeare dramatizes, individualizes, converts archetype into image, idea into action.

This is by no means an unfamiliar argument, but it is expressed here with an economy and precision that makes it feel like news. We feel the force of the lines "the infant,/Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms" because we've been alerted not only to the crucial presence of the verb "puke" but to the fact that this is Shakespeare's word. We feel viscerally that Shakespeare was indeed an artist who converts archetype into image. We feel, however tentatively, that we have discovered something crucial about the mind of this artist, about the way he thought. We want this argument to continue, but all we get is a page.

What did Shakespeare think about thinking? Near the end of *The Tempest*, when

WOMEN AT WAR ON TWO FRONTS

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everything finally seems to be going well, the exiled magician Prospero stages a pageant, a play within the play, to celebrate the impending marriage of his daughter Miranda to Ferdinand, the prince of Naples. "Let me live here ever," says young Ferdinand. But suddenly the play stops—Prospero has had a thought, one that cannot be ignored: Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo are still plotting Prospero's death.

Thought in Shakespeare is what interrupts us, turns us, changes us, makes us move. This is why all the great speeches feel like dramatizations of the mind in motion. And this, in turn, is why we feel so acutely that we know Shakespeare's characters from the inside out, as if we had access to their minds. "Our revels now are ended," says Prospero to the startled Ferdinand after the pageant has evaporated.

> These our actors,
> As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
> Are melted into air, into thin air.
> And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
> The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself—
> Yea, all which it inherit—shall dissolve,
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

What has happened to Prospero's urgency? Rather than running off to subvert Caliban's plot against his life, he ruminates on the illusion he has created, and his thoughts move from the impermanence of artistic creation to the impermanence of human life. Then another thought pierces him:

> Sir, I am vexed.
> Bear with my weakness, my old brain is troubled.
> Be not disturbed with my infirmity.
> If you be pleased, retire into my cell
> And there repose. A turn or two I'll walk,
> To still my beating mind.

Does Prospero need to take a stroll because he's upset about Caliban? No, that thought has passed, like the pageant it interrupted: instead, Prospero has been shaken by his unexpected thoughts about his own mortality. Who could have seen it coming? More than anything, Prospero's thoughts have been undone by thought itself, the mercurial process through which the beating mind makes itself known over time.

Shakespeare's genius was his ability to fasten that process to the page, syllable by syllable, so that by attending the theater we might learn to recognize the sound of our thinking. You will learn a thing or two worth learning from Bate's *Soul of the Age*, but to remember what a great biography of the mind might feel like, listen to Prospero, Hamlet and Lear. ■

Not Easy Being Greene

by MICHELLE ORANGE

"If anybody ever tries to write a biography of me," Graham Greene once mused, "how complicated they are going to find it and how misled they are going to be." It's a sentiment often held up by Greene's biographers as a kind of immunity medallion: his intractability appears to surpass that of even your average manic-depressive titan of twentieth-century literature, yet it is paradoxically essential to understanding his character.

Canadian scholar Richard Greene, who is no relation to the author, brandishes this medallion in the preface to *Graham Greene: A Life in Letters*, a new collection he has assembled from the tens of thousands of letters Greene wrote over his lifetime. A chief attraction of this volume is the access RG received to several recently discovered troves of letters, many written to Greene's family members, which were not available to previous biographers. Nevertheless, RG warns, "The sum of all these discoveries is to make Graham Greene a stranger to us again."

A stranger with no shortage of calling cards: devout Catholic, lifelong adulterer, pulpy hack, canonical novelist; self-destructive, meticulously disciplined, deliriously romantic, bitterly cynical; moral relativist, strict theologian, salon communist, closet monarchist; civilized to a stuffy fault and *louche* to drugged-out distraction, anti-imperialist crusader and postcolonial parasite, self-excoriating and self-aggrandizing, to name just a few. "But who are you, Mr. Greene?" Yvonne Cloetta, his last mistress, remembered Greene being asked throughout his career. "I am my books," he insisted, a problematic deflection for several reasons, the most obvious being that the Greene oeuvre and its secondary materials support any number of conclusions about who their creator was and what he believed. Indeed, in Greene's two memoirs he manages—resolutely, annoyingly—to reveal little of his emotional life. Considered as a literary trope, Greene's contradictions hold the appeal of universality: in him, we can all locate some part of ourselves. As a man, he may be too like us for adulatory comfort. Even among his fans, abiding love for Greene is rare; for a man who considered disloyalty to be a privilege of the faithful, the hair shirt fits.

Another problem with the "I am my books" autobiographical imperative is that his books, by his own account, have been so widely misunderstood. I first encountered Greene's writing in my early 20s. Exiting the Catholic faith at the age that Greene converted to it, I found myself drawn to his works

OLIVER WALSTON

Graham Greene at Catherine Walston's country estate in Cambridgeshire, circa 1953

Graham Greene
A Life in Letters.
Edited by Richard Greene.
Norton. 446 pp. $35.

Michelle Orange is the author of The Sicily Papers *and the editor of* From the Notebook: The Unwritten Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, *a collection found in Issue 22 of* McSweeney's. *Her writing has appeared in the* New York Times, *the* Village Voice *and other publications.*

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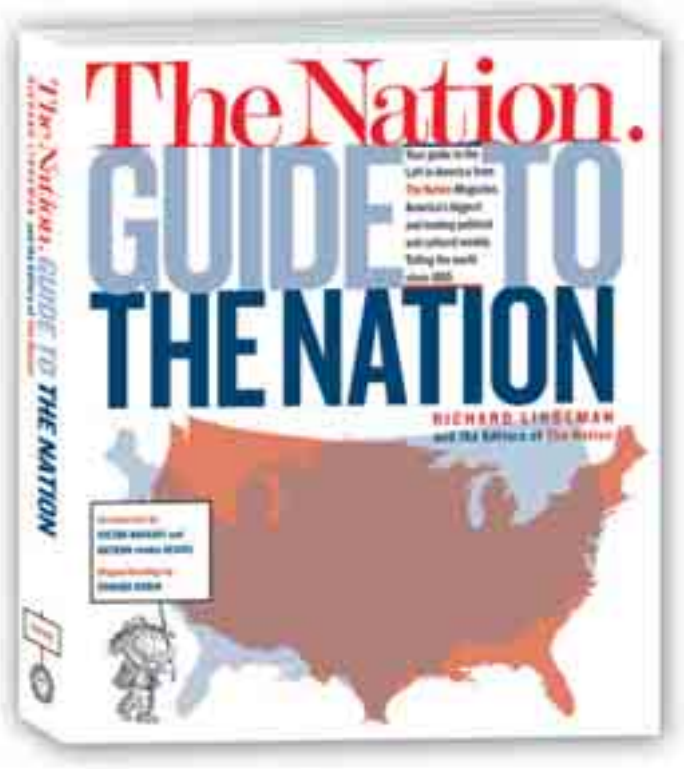

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of doubt and devotion. I devoured *The End of the Affair*, deeply enamored of Greene's chiseled, controlled and yet blissfully, somehow permissively emotional prose. As a moody kid I reveled in Maurice Bendrix's paroxysms of jealousy, his "record of hate," and despite my status as a recovering Catholic, took comfort in the idea that even an atheist can have doubts. It was Greene's first novel narrated in the first person, an experiment he undertook after reading *Great Expectations*, and the voice was a revelation.

By the time *The End of the Affair* was published in 1951, Greene had already ascended the ranks to Catholic superstardom. Sarah, Bendrix's married lover, was received as the next in the author's growing line of martyrs; as punishment—was a bit of a buzz-kill. And so years later, when I read in *Ways of Escape*, Greene's second autobiography, that he was crestfallen by the dominant reading of the book, and intended Scobie not as a model of exalted self-sacrifice but an example of the way "that pity can be the expression of an almost monstrous pride," I felt that I had a book—and an author—returned to me.

Reader, I read on. "Material is not easily or painlessly gained," Greene wrote in his introduction to a collected volume of Ford Madox Ford's work, "and one cannot help wondering what agonies of frustration and error lay behind." One cannot, indeed. But Greene's readers seek out his self, spread across the modes of memoir, novel, short story, travel narrative, play and screenplay, criticism, essay and now an enormous lode of daily correspondence, against not just his wishes but the premise of human opacity posited throughout his work. It's a brilliant circularity, and it has kept his legacy and the biographical gravy train running right on time.

Time's cover image of Greene was captioned, 'Adultery can lead to sainthood.'

on the cover of *Time* magazine, an iconic etching of Greene in three-quarter profile was underlined with the painfully dense summation: "Adultery can lead to sainthood." The Catholic faith was booming, and a number of high-profile conversions suggested, however improbably, that it had also captured the imagination of the scribbling elite. Three years after Ernest Hemingway adopted the faith of his Roman Catholic second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, Evelyn Waugh made headlines with his conversion in 1930, followed by Robert Lowell, Edith Sitwell, Walker Percy and Muriel Spark; the work of earlier convert Ford Madox Ford and, to a lesser extent, James Joyce, marked the beginning of a period that reached its peak at mid-century, during which theological concerns were at the center of Western sociocultural discourse. Greene had collided with his times and, as is often the case with asteroid-force mass-market impacts, some critical concussions were sustained. Reading *The Heart of the Matter* fifty years after its publication, I found the character of pious philanderer Major Scobie—a suicidal wretch whose enshrined selflessness disguises a potent narcissism—tip-to-toe enraging. It was clear to me that Scobie was repellent, less so that Greene knew he was repellent. My suspicion that what is considered one of Greene's best books, like so many of its era, might hinge on a genteel misogyny—where women are experienced foremost as vessels of demand and responsibility that men inadvertently create and then sentence themselves to love

As Greene predicted, his biographers have proved no less boggled for being fixed on their tracks. One of the chief recommendations of the Norman Sherry trilogy, three volumes written over thirty years and with Greene's cooperation, is watching an Oedipal bond to a subject take hold of an author so completely that he botches one of the finest opportunities in twentieth-century literary biography. Sherry's growing disillusionment with his subject, which by the third book compels him to include a list of Greene's forty-seven favorite prostitutes, eventually supersedes the text. And so when RG writes in his preface to *Graham Greene: A Life in Letters* that "this book intends to clear the stage and to give the life back to its subject," he is sniffing in Sherry's general direction. He landed a more direct hit in the fall of 2006: among the complaints lodged in "Owning Graham Greene: The Norman Sherry Project," RG's lengthy and punitive review in *University of Toronto Quarterly* of Sherry's final volume, are Sherry's deliriously prurient approach, "adolescent and obsessional" prose and his omission of Greene's correspondence with Auberon Waugh, his French agent Marie Biche and the author R.K. Narayan, whom he championed for decades. (This last objection is attended by no small amount of chagrin, given Sherry's extended monopolization of Greene's papers. Citing a contested letter of permission Greene had signed at Sherry's behest the day before he died of leukemia in April 1991, Sherry assumed exclusive control of Greene's archive and was still holding tight in 2002. This effectively hamstrung RG's work on a still-forthcoming biography of Edith Sitwell, her correspondence with Greene at the time of her conversion being crucial to his research.) Finally, RG mentions Sherry's abandoned plans to publish Greene's letters in multiple volumes without the addendum that he was negotiating with Greene's children and literary estate to secure the contract for himself.

It would have been fair warning. *A Life in Letters* is very much not just a response but a correction to Sherry's trilogy. In his preface, RG announces that "Graham Greene was a man of decency and courage; he chronicled the suffering of the world's most oppressed people and devoted his life to writing books that enriched the lives of millions," and suggests that to examine his flaws would be "redundant." And so it is unsurprising that most of RG's editorial choices and commentary prove blandly flattering to Greene. One begins to worry, however, as Greene's more unsavory attributes are habitually—if not completely—elided, buffed or excused away, and pages of boilerplate encouragements and charitable offers to distant family members and assorted associates pile up: if RG had not been so bent on avenging Greene, might he have come up with a more illuminating book? Has he too, in his sympathetic way, been misled?

That is not to say that *A Life in Letters* does not manage a steady, inviting flicker, punctuated by the occasional psychic bonfire. It could not be otherwise in a work where Greene's dichotomous persona, prone to self-effacement and self-dramatization in maddeningly equal measures, holds the floor. Part of the appeal of any such collection, but particularly one involving a writer as prismatic as Greene, is the readerly detective work—the hard nerd labor—so much raw material impels. Despite RG's occasionally intrusive opinions and biased contextualizing, his savvy arrangement of the material facilitates some solid independent study; a reader who undertakes an investigation of the letters' tone, address, frequency and signature style will find that, even in the most mundane of these missives, that work becomes its own obsessive reward. I'm still not sure what it means that there were several authors with whom Greene was on a strict last-name basis—"Dear Orwell"—but I certainly enjoyed mulling it over.

Beginning with his earliest letters, Greene

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demonstrates a crack novelist's gift for narrative and a keen sense of address; his voice alters with his intended audience and effect, and within those alterations a pattern of strategic self-fashioning emerges. Greene conceived of himself as a writer from a startlingly young age, as evidenced not just by his teenage literary networking and angling toward publication but the personal storytelling that was his natural, and perhaps restorative, milieu. As a 16-year-old on a Mediterranean cruise with his aunt, Greene writes to his "Mumma" in Berkhamsted, England, dispatching quickly with news of himself to move on to a sharp tableau of the ship's most memorable passengers. The cruise was preceded by what RG refers to as an "emotional collapse," which prompted the first in a series of suicide attempts and a six-month course of psychoanalysis. The wry, cheering letters home suggest that even as a boy travel made Greene happy, not least because it provided him with a tale to tell and, in turn, the solder for his rapidly cohering identity.

As a lover Greene is no less compelled by the narrative impulse, and a new persona emerges. At Oxford his nascent literary ambition took root, as did the mania that would charge many of his romances, in particular his pursuit of Vivienne Dayrell-Browning (later Vivien Greene). By the third letter and the second month of their relationship, Greene is in what will become a familiar agony, anticipating her too reserved responses and then responding to his own anticipation, singlehandedly creating a dialogue of courtship in which he is the aggrieved but unyielding, ardent lover, pleading perfectly rational solutions for his unreasonable predicament. At 22 he feels entrenched in not just the writing life but the perilous self-examination it entails. While hospitalized following an appendectomy, he witnesses the death of a small child and writes to Dayrell-Browning: "Are people who write entirely & absolutely selfish, darling? Even though in a way I hated it yesterday evening—one half of me was saying how lucky it was—added experience—& I kept on catching myself trying to memorise details—Sister's face, the faces of the other men in the ward. And I felt quite excited aesthetically. It made one rather disgusted with oneself."

It took Greene fourteen books to arrive at a first-person novel, a project that even then he undertook with considerable trepidation. Having grown so comfortable in the third person that he came to regard it as a velvet prison, the chronic escape artist in Greene soon grew equally wary of inhabiting a single character—a self-loathing writer of "entertainments" at that—so fully. "Many a time I regretted pursuing 'I' along his dismal road," Greene wrote, "and contemplated beginning *The End of the Affair* all over again with Bendrix…seen from outside in the third person." Indeed, if Greene was endlessly cagey about being mistaken for his protagonists (in a letter to Evelyn Waugh, he relents: "With a writer of your genius and insight I certainly would not attempt to hide behind the time-old gag that an author can never be identified with his characters"), in these letters he also appears tactically aware of being mistaken for *himself*. Greene's deployment of the third-person generic is legion and is in most cases simply a product of a different era and upbringing. Occasionally, however, he tends to dissolve behind the impersonal "one" when uncomfortable, lest an errant "I" pin him too firmly, or revealingly, to the wall. In 1943, deep into a wartime affair with a woman named Dorothy Glover, Greene writes emotionally, drunkenly and somewhat manipulatively to his wife: "My darling, *in vino veritas*. You are the best, the most dear person I've ever known. Life is sometimes so beastly that one wishes one were dead." As RG notes, in this case Greene originally ended the last sentence with "I wish I were dead," before opening his favorite syntactical booby hatch and

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slipping away, leaving a sort of holographically hedged version of himself—as it seems he did in the actuality of his marriage as well—in the place where a husband should be.

Greene's letters to Catherine Walston—the American wife of a British politician, itinerant socialite and fellow convert who in 1946 finagled an introduction to Greene by asking him to be her godfather—cannot really be oversold. Though already heavily quoted elsewhere, here they suggest her pivotal role in a decade of productivity but also the feelings of "great happiness and great torment" she elicited in Greene (Walston provided at least partial inspiration for *The End of the Affair*'s Sarah). Greene could be a bossy, petulant, melodramatic lover, raising the specter of suicide more often than a Spanish courtesan, and the romantic pattern of demanding, almost delusional idealization followed by disappointment and retreat set forth in his letters to Dayrell-Browning is, largely and somewhat depressingly, repeated here. But in these letters to Walston, whom he often used as a kind of literary cheat sheet, Greene is also incited to compose his most full-bodied and finely crafted epistolary narratives. "Will you keep this letter in case I need it to refresh my mind?" he writes at the top of a long, gorgeously observed letter from Haiti in 1954. The letters' ruminative, searching cast and almost dizzingly heightened language are the highlight of a collection that is padded with some dry, cursory correspondence; particularly after fame elbows in, the letters are almost always dutiful responses to fans, colleagues and intimates alike. ("I only write letters when I receive letters," he wrote to author Etienne Leroux in 1972. "I imagine that's a common fault with a writer who feels he's done enough when he's put his five hundred words on paper.")

The postmarks that precede each letter are perhaps the most vivid indication of the manic-depression that gripped Greene for most of his life; his whereabouts vary almost from letter to letter. From his first major trip, to Estonia in 1934 (where he conceived what was originally *Our Man in Tallinn*, a novel he later relocated to Havana), through countless African, Latin American, Asian and European sojourns, Greene whipsawed around the world like a man pursued. His early trips were aimless, though he was increasingly drawn to regions of conflict and suffering for narrative material as well as a kind of existential succor; Greene sought what his detractors have described as a morbid, almost decadent form of serenity, a sort he thought could be achieved only amid actual circumstantial horrors that matched or surpassed—and thereby stayed—those of an unquiet mind. In a 1940 letter to Anthony Powell he describes blitzed London as "extraordinarily pleasant these days with all the new open spaces."

Greene's unquiet mind sought serenity amid circumstantial horrors.

Through numerous halfhearted suicide attempts and at least one round of electroshock therapy, Greene was relentlessly productive, as the chapters filled with his jobbing correspondence confirm. Hardly the cloistered novelist, Greene played a number of relatively public roles throughout his career, including film critic and book editor and later publisher, journalist and political advocate, but none less comfortably than that of professional Catholic. Sandwiched between *The Power and the Glory* and *The End of the Affair* is the engine of his Catholic trilogy, *The Heart of the Matter*, released to great acclaim in 1949. "It's all too fantastic," he wrote to Walston that year, "my books in every shop." Initially elated over the book's reception in the Catholic community, Greene worried about being pigeonholed by others and perhaps himself. Having courted this attention with Catholic-catnip plot twists (he later expressed regret, for instance, over Sarah's posthumous "miracles" in *Affair*), he was deeply ambivalent about his new status as an icon of the faith as well as the endless debates the trilogy's success inspired. Interestingly, in that same letter to Walston he mentions priests who "flock reverently around" him and indicates that the reading of Scobie as a modern martyr was more intentional—and closer to his own empathies—than he would later admit. "Though now of course I take the opposite view to Scobie," Greene writes, "that nobody can ruin another person." (Evelyn Waugh, who described Greene as having "great balls theologically," criticized Scobie's suicide as "either a very loose poetical expression or a mad blasphemy.")

Greene turncoat Anthony Burgess once noted that Greene had developed "a highly idiosyncratic version of Catholicism, which could even accommodate a probable absence of the deity." It's a charge these letters tend to bear out: whether he is invoking copyright technicalities to avoid amending foreign editions of *The Power and the Glory* (after an outraged cardinal denounced the book for its portrayal of the priesthood) or trying to convince Dayrell-Browning, for whom he would convert, that he could adopt her "ideal of celibacy," Greene's struggle with the faith is reflected in the way he seemed to shape his Catholic identity to suit not just his audience but his purpose. With the deeply pious Waugh, Catholicism was a hillocked common ground, one Greene traversed in his letters with an uncharacteristic deference, theological balls in check. With Walston, his faith was an exciting and treacherous playground—the thing that brought them together and would ultimately keep them apart—and some of his most breathtakingly contraindicated musing is found in the mingling of spiritual and physical passions she stirred in him. "Cafryn, dear," he writes in 1947, "I want to kiss you, touch you, make love to you—& simply sit in a car & be driven by you.... I nearly slept at Mass today. How dead it was—not dead in the amusing phosphorescent way of last Sunday, aware of your shoulder half an inch from mine, but just limp & meaningless & boring. I'm not even a Catholic properly away from you."

Green was inscrutable in his faith as in so many other things; over time his letters suggest a life of dedicated churchgoing despite a seemingly untenable relationship with the church. Ultimately he may have been more of a cradle Catholic—prone to doubt but enthralled by the church's sacred mysteries; preferring the familial culture of the faith to its isolating dogmatic rigors—than his critics allowed. Greene was greatly disillusioned by the Second Vatican Council, which abolished the Latin liturgy and moved the church away from some of the strict theological tenets that converts seemed to hold especially dear (Greene felt that his friend Waugh, who died in 1966, was literally heartbroken by the event). In later years he remained critical but, like so many ambivalent Catholics, still attended Mass once or twice a month. In a 1978 letter to a fan, he wrote: "When I rather hastily said that if I was young today I would not become a Catholic I think I meant that the differences between the Christian beliefs were becoming less and less.... Our idea of transubstantiation has become far less physical and more philosophical." It took a few decades, but "Catholic agnostic" is the designation he settled on; it's an apt obfuscation, and he stuck with it.

"I'm writing a small bit of autobiography myself," Greene wrote to the poet George

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Barker in 1967, referring to what would become *A Sort of Life*, the memoir of his childhood that his psychoanalyst urged him to begin as a rampart against the massive breakdown Greene feared his deep depression in the late 1950s might portend. "It's something to fall back on when the imagination begins to fail. No more disgusting to my mind than old age itself." And yet, as the sheer volume of his surviving letters insists, Greene wrote his autobiography—self-disgust be damned—every day of his life, with a nomadic imagination and coiled moral introspection that is, in brief but sky-opening flashes, equal to his fiction. That he knew this and must have known that we would someday know it too is perhaps the determinedly elusive Greene's final, refractive jest. ■

Wilson Agonistes

by DAVID MILNE

The Freedom Agenda
Why America Must Spread Democracy (Just Not the Way George Bush Did).
By James Traub.
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 262 pp. $25.

The Crisis of American Foreign Policy
Wilsonianism in the Twenty-first Century.
By G. John Ikenberry, Thomas J. Knock, Anne-Marie Slaughter and Tony Smith.
Princeton. 157 pp. $24.95.

Continuing a long tradition of worldly Europeans condemning naïve but dangerous Americans, Sigmund Freud viewed the twenty-eighth president of the United States as nothing less than a global catastrophe. Freud criticized Woodrow Wilson for his messianic religiosity and self-righteousness, concluding that the manner in which his moral absolutism withered in the face of amoral European diplomacy caused much damage to world affairs. Without actually meeting his subject, Freud surmised that Wilson suffered from a variant of the Oedipus complex, which led him to act as a feminized supplicant to Georges Clemenceau and David Lloyd George and as ill-fatedly macho toward domestic opponents such as Henry Cabot Lodge. Freud's not-so-subtle insinuation was that few phenomena are more dangerous than an American president with good intentions, a poor sense of geopolitical reality and unresolved Oedipal drives that would have made Little Hans blush.

Thomas Woodrow Wilson: A Psychological Study, which Freud wrote with the American diplomat William C. Bullitt, was savaged upon publication. Its vitriol is indeed wearying—Freud's psychoanalytic interpretations often amount to wild conjecture based on unreliable hearsay. The renowned historian A.J.P. Taylor dismissed the book as a "disgrace," while Vladimir Nabokov wrote that "I welcome Freud's Woodrow Wilson not only because of its comic appeal, which is great, but because that surely must be the last rusty nail in the Viennese Quack's coffin." Yet despite its flaws, the book is not without scraps of insight:

> Nothing mattered except noble intentions. As a result, when [Wilson] crossed the ocean to bring to war-torn Europe a just and lasting peace, he put himself in the deplorable position of the benefactor who wishes to restore the eyesight of the patient but does not know the construction of the eye and has neglected to learn the necessary methods of operation.

Change a few words and the passage becomes a pointed critique of the Bush administration's policy toward the Middle East. And this is why Wilson's presidency continues to speak to us. More than anyone's, Wilson's historical luster corresponds with the foreign policy in vogue at any given time. When retrenchment and realism hold sway, Wilson appears misguided, a blind eye doctor. When internationalism drives American diplomacy, Wilson is a visionary, his presidency a lodestar.

When Freud and Bullitt completed their work in the 1930s, Wilson's reputation was at its lowest ebb. Throughout the First World War, Wilson had preached the virtues of free trade, national self-determination, responsible decolonization and multilateral institution-building, and had called for the United States to "make the world safe for democracy." These visionary goals evaporated in 1920 when the Senate rejected the Versailles Treaty, and America retreated from the atavistic intrigues of European-dominated international relations. Through the '20s and '30s the League of Nations foundered without US participation, and Germany, Italy and Japan prepared to right earlier wrongs. Had Freud and Bullitt published their polemic at this time, its reception would have been warm. But to spare Wilson's widow any embarrassment, the book's publication was postponed until after her death. *Thomas Woodrow Wilson* ended up appearing in 1967, at a time when Wilson was viewed by many as a foiled but noble prophet whose collaborative world-system dedicated to liberal-capitalist prosperity was twenty-five years ahead of its time. The scathing reaction to Freud's book was emblematic of the resuscitation of Wilson as a force for good in the world. "Wilsonianism," the notion that the United States has a duty not only to pursue its self-interest but to make the world more livable, peaceful and democratic, had established an enduring place in the American psyche.

Many neoconservative members of the Bush administration viewed themselves as "hard Wilsonians," dismissive of multilateral institutions but convinced that Wilson's crusade for global democracy should shape American foreign policy. Bush crystallized this philosophy in his second inaugural address, asserting that "the survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands." It takes no great leap of imagination to cast the 2003 invasion of Iraq in a Wilsonian light. Through deposing Saddam Hussein and occupying the country, Bush's advisers believed Iraq would become a laboratory for economic liberalization and democratic reform. Rebuilt from the top down, buoyed by vast oil reserves, the nation would follow the same trajectory as postwar Japan and West Germany—two nations pummeled by the US military before rising from the rubble. As the durability of Iraq's transformation became apparent, the rest of the Middle East would be persuaded to follow its example. Formerly skeptical allies would eat humble pie and assist in this grand project. As Paul Wolfowitz baldly asserted, "unilateralism is the high road to multilateralism." Where America leads, the world must follow.

The wreckage of Bush's Iraq policy is extensive, and Wilsonian internationalism can be counted among the wounded. In *The Freedom Agenda*, James Traub endeavors to

David Milne, a lecturer in American politics at the University of East Anglia, is the author of America's Rasputin: Walt Rostow and the Vietnam War *(Hill and Wang).*

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reject the neoconservatives' hard Wilsonianism while arguing that the United States would be disadvantaged by rejecting its national credo of spreading freedom and democracy. His insightful study traces the history of America's freedom agenda from Wilson's failed attempt to impose his will at Versailles to the cold war—during which democracy promotion invariably took second place to the exigencies of superpower rivalry—to the triumphs and failures of the Bush, Clinton and Bush II administrations. Is it possible, Traub asks, to emulate Wilson's sage emphasis on genuine multilateral diplomacy—necessitating some painful but necessary ceding of national sovereignty—but reject the notion that America must itself transform nations into variations on a liberal-capitalist democracy? Are Wilson, Bush and their future heirs simply proselytizers of a delusional vision of America as an "Empire of Liberty," as Thomas Jefferson phrased it, and blind to the reality that what appears well intentioned in Washington is in fact humiliating to others? Traub is a careful writer, not given to rhetorical flourishes, and his conclusions are measured. He says that it "is reckless to speak of the spread of democracy in transcendent and theological terms," and that "it is pointlessly alienating and self-righteous to describe the promotion of democracy as a peculiarly American faith." Nonetheless, Traub stresses that "the next president must not abandon the language of democracy or retreat into the kind of hard-shell realism that George Bush the candidate proposed in 2000."

As a check of sorts on American hubris, Traub develops three case studies that challenge his central thesis. The first recaps how, after an elected government had fallen in the Dominican Republic in 1916, Woodrow Wilson dispatched the Marines to occupy Santo Domingo and establish a military government. But American efforts to promote rural reform and political development achieved little beyond strengthening the position of wealthy landowners. Following the US withdrawal in 1924, chaos resumed until Rafael Trujillo established his tyrannical rule in 1930. Traub then turns to the Philippines, where for all the blood and treasure that America expended in its campaign to pacify and modernize the nation, involving a military strategy that was often brutal and counterproductive, the results were decidedly mixed. As Traub writes, "The United States ruled the Philippines for almost half a century; the nation that emerged was broadly Americanized in its talk and its tastes, but much less so in its politics and civic culture." Finally, Traub discusses the economic and political rehabilitation of Japan and Germany beginning in 1945—America's greatest twentieth-century success in nation-building. But unlike many devotees of democracy promotion, Traub recognizes that the rapid economic growth that both nations experienced was attributable to a peculiar set of circumstances—Germany and Japan had been modern, industrialized societies for two generations before their crushing defeat in the Second World War—that were not in place in less developed countries.

Indeed, Traub is so diligent in telling cautionary tales that he almost persuades the reader to reject his thesis and subscribe instead to the realism of George Kennan or Reinhold Niebuhr. In 1951 Kennan concluded a characteristically learned lecture on the purpose of diplomacy with the hope that

> we will have the modesty to admit that our own national interest is all that we are capable of knowing and understanding—and the courage to recognize that if our own purposes and undertakings here at home are decent ones, unsullied by arrogance or hostility toward other people or delusions of superiority, then the pursuit of our national interest can never fail to be conducive to a better world.

This is an elegant exposition on the purpose of realism and a powerful riposte to Wilsonianism. But Traub believes that America can achieve much more than the narrow pursuit of its national interest: the nation can set an example and act as a conduit for democratic reform through the disbursement or denial of monetary resources and trading privileges—a rudimentary element in what Harvard University's Joseph Nye described as soft power. Traub's vision for democracy promotion is more modest than the belligerent version advocated by neoconservatives. He also states unequivocally that America must respect the results of democratic elections, regardless of who is brought to power. In Egypt, for example, this may require the United States to distance itself from the repressive government of Hosni Mubarak and reach an eventual accommodation with Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood—an Islamist movement with broad-ranging support that, Traub argues, exhibits potential for meaningful engagement with the West. Insights such as these make *The Freedom Agenda* a thought-provoking and admirably evenhanded book.

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Contrary to Traub's sweeping narrative history of the twentieth century, *The Crisis of American Foreign Policy* examines Wilson's resonance today. Four noted scholars—three Wilson sympathizers and one caustic critic—offer thoughtful essays on what Wilson's historical example might offer twenty-first-century leaders. G. John Ikenberry's introduction makes his Wilsonian proclivities clear: "in a fundamental sense, there is no turning back to pre-Wilsonian ideas about international order, such as those associated with the old classical balance of power system. For better or worse, we are all Wilsonians now." Thomas J. Knock displays fine historical literacy in his essay, which succeeds in rescuing Wilson's core agenda from those who have sought to remold his legacy to suit unrealizable contemporary aims. But it is the combative essays by Tony Smith and Anne-Marie Slaughter that invigorate the collection. At the heart of their dispute is a sharp disagreement over the Princeton Project on National Security, an avowedly Wilsonian initiative that future historians may identify as a blueprint for President Obama's foreign policy—in the same way that the 1997 Project for the New American Century foretold the direction of the Bush administration.

Co-directed by Slaughter and Ikenberry, both of whom teach political science at Princeton University, the Princeton Project was established in 2004 with the bold intention of emulating George Kennan, the cold war's grand strategist, and writing, as Slaughter phrases it, "a collective X article" for the twenty-first century. Titled "Forging a World of Liberty Under Law: U.S. National Security in the Twenty-First Century," the final report emphasizes the merits of liberal internationalism, repudiates the Bush administration's unilateralism and war of choice in Iraq and recommends that multilateral institutions such as the United Nations and NATO be transformed into more effective decision-making forums. If reforming the UN proves untenable, the authors recommend that a global "Concert of Democracies" be established as "an alternative forum for liberal democracies to authorize collective action." Most interestingly, while liberal democracy is valorized as the best available political system, the final report de-emphasizes the necessity of democracy promotion. Establishing a government's legitimacy among its people, it claims, is much more important than assuring that the government assumes and exerts power in a democratic manner. And so the report proposes that "liberty under law"—the creation of concrete legal rights to constrain government action and foster economic growth—is a more useful and realistic goal for certain nations than free and fair elections.

Wilson skeptic Tony Smith claims that the Princeton Project's final report is "no more than a reformulation of the Bush Doctrine achieved through multilateralizing its terms." He believes that Ikenberry and Slaughter—whom he describes as "neoliberals"—are as devoted to the maintenance and projection of US hegemony as the neoconservatives of the Bush era. Smith warns that the report echoes Wilson and Bush in its insistence that "the predominance of liberal democracies is necessary to prevent a return to great power security competition," and that "the preventive use of force" must remain part of America's military and strategic armory. While the Princeton Project's vision of a Wilsonian foreign policy for the twenty-first century is ostensibly well intentioned, Wilson in fact bequeathed an unrealizable legacy. The world is infinitely complex, the march of liberal democracy is neither foreordained nor necessarily superior—as China's economic expansion exemplifies—and placing the United States at the vanguard of a movement designed to spread liberty across the world smacks of self-defeating arrogance, regardless of how it is cloaked. For Smith, Wilsonianism is a distracting Kantian echo in an increasingly Hobbesian world.

Slaughter offers a spirited defense of Woodrow Wilson and the Princeton Project's final report. She dismisses Smith's characterization of neoliberalism as a minor foreign policy variation on neoconservatism as "an artificial and often polemical construct," observing that "Democratic foreign policy experts routinely lament the absence of an equivalent set of coherent ideas among their cohort. It is an interesting if not sad commentary on Democratic politics that the only person who sees such coherence is a critic." She asserts that any deployment of American forces abroad must be made "multilaterally," although this may be sanctioned by NATO approval alone if it proves impossible to secure unanimous consent at the UN Security Council. This establishes criteria for US military action that would have permitted the 1999 intervention in Kosovo but would have disallowed the 2003 invasion of Iraq—a convenient formula that will please many humanitarian hawks. Slaughter believes that it is only through close cooperation with the international community that America can achieve its foreign policy goals, and that modesty should infuse the essential task of creating a world of liberty under law:

> Human progress in any society requires economic, social, and political transformation from the bottom up. Liberal democratic institutions cannot be imposed or even established from without, but must instead be built from within.... The Princeton Project... portrays democracy as a means to the end of ordered liberty, much as the American founders saw it.

This academic clash will resonate with progressives, for Smith's skepticism and Slaughter's optimism reside in many of us. And this same battle of ideas—the pragmatic versus the internationalist—will likely be repeated during high-level debates in the Obama administration. Indeed, Slaughter will participate in this process directly, as President Obama has appointed her to serve as director of policy planning at the State Department—a potentially influential position whose previous occupants include George Kennan, Paul Nitze, Walt Rostow and Paul Wolfowitz.

One must hope that Tony Smith's cautionary words still ring in Slaughter's ears. After all, liberal internationalists are particularly susceptible to viewing crises through a black-and-white lens. Liberal cold warriors like Rostow justified the Americanization of the Vietnam War in the name of defending liberty and freedom in South Vietnam. Slaughter herself supported the 2003 war to topple Saddam Hussein in light of "his horrific human rights violations," a record that led her to believe, "without carefully scrutinizing the available evidence," that "he had nuclear or biological weapons." Those with the best intentions have often displayed the weakest foreign policy instincts.

Wilson once wrote that "only those who are ignorant of the world can believe that any nation, even so great a nation as the United States, can stand alone and play a single part in the history of mankind." In a campaign address in 1912, he employed a very different tone, asserting that it was the duty of the United States to "show the way to the nations of the world how they shall walk in the paths of liberty." If the new president heeds the wisdom of Wilson's first remark, and avoids being seduced by the hubris of the second, his administration may reclaim Wilsonianism from the tarnishing embrace of his predecessor. ■

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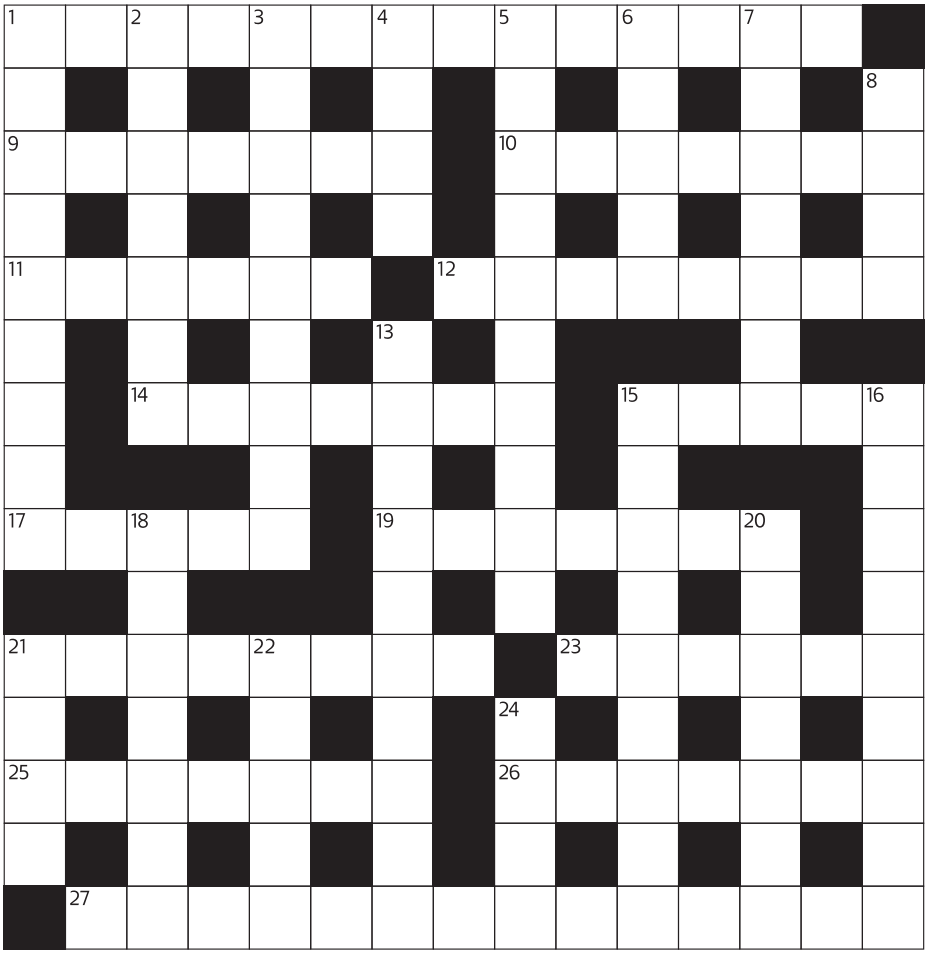

ACROSS

1 Providence may have such a radical type, but one might prove chicken! (5,6,3)

9 Where you might see tree limbs, or so-called limbs of Satan at times. (7)

10 "Drop Dead!" Possibly without a way to get elbowed! (7)

11 and **12** You might see one at the circus. There's a point to what writers use with a piggish type! (5-9)

14 It seems the way little Catherine acted was like a very jumpy type. (7)

15 Doom's to be found where the wicked were destroyed. (5)

17 Out of the deeps, this comes back to drive fast! (5)

19 A volume of works that a Brit might take to work. (7)

21 Expect the first half of it to be legal, in a very spelled-out way. (8)

23 In Saudi Arabia, a capital city! (6)

25 A glacial lake has his all wrong—to make things dirty, obviously. (7)

26 United Nations, United States, United Airlines—in short, not very ordinary! (7)

27 Sham flowers on the face of it? (9,5)

DOWN

1 and **21** A good place to spot the fight from, with circles on fatal days, in the revolutionary East. (8,5)

2 It holds the paddle, but is nothing on a right small bit of hair. (7)

3 Fixed up the text with direction to people, very old-fashioned. (9)

4 Does some talking, ever old—yes, old—in two directions. (4)

5 A very quiet praising—but, still, noisy praising! (10)

6 Quaintly humorous, with the beginning of a drum beat, when rapid. (5)

7 The last part not paid for? (With a lot of money given, however.) (7)

8 Does the door have to be broken down because of the bad smell? (4)

13 Take little notice, Scottie; I lost some hair and got bawled out for it! (10)

15 Proving a nickname isn't necessarily a term for the old devil! (Sort of robs a possibly quiet finish.) (10)

16 What mountains should not be made of. (9)

18 A Beethoven concerto—fit for a ruling type, or a penguin! (7)

20 Flipper's in the kitchen! (7)

21 See 1

22 In Paris he joins a CIA operation, pertaining to the "hip" type. (5)

24 Very uninteresting, and certainly not very sharp, or shiny. (4)

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The New Anti-Semitism

Who are its advocates? What are its goals?

The Holocaust, in which over six million Jews were brutally murdered by the Nazis and their enthusiastic collaborators, happened over 60 years ago. So terrific were the events that – even today, about two generations later – nobody would wish to identify himself with them. Yet, a new anti-Semitism is now rearing its head. It is important to be aware of it.

What are the facts?

Who are the new anti-Semites? The new anti-Semites do not publicly proclaim their desire to bring about a second Holocaust or to subject the Jews to mass murder or annihilation. The hatred is aimed against the state of Israel, which, according to the new anti-Semites, represents all that is evil in the world and which is the main violator of human rights and guilty of virtually every other abuse that can be conceived. This poison is now so widespread that a poll taken in Europe not too long ago found Israel to be the greatest menace to the peace of the world – far ahead of such murderous regimes as those of Iran or of North Korea.

The leaders and instigators of this new anti-Semitism are concentrated on the political left, its most active and vocal spokesmen being found in our prestige universities. Such is the anti-Zionist (anti-Semitic) focus of the left that, almost incomprehensibly, it includes a fair number of Jewish professors and other "intellectuals," not just here in the United States, but even in Israel itself.

Those on the extreme left call for the abolition of the State of Israel outright, although they do not tell us what they propose to do with the five million Israeli Jews. They would presumably be left to the tender mercies of the Arabs, who would, of course, have no greater joy than to emulate or perhaps even to "improve" on the Nazi model and to give "final solution(!) to the Jewish problem" once and for all. That isn't going to happen, of course, not because anybody in the world would lift a finger to prevent it, but because, fortunately, Israel is a very strong and most capable nation.

A death wish for Israel. In deference to "world opinion" and also to the wishes of the United States, Israel has allowed itself to be pressured into innumerable concessions to those who are sworn to destroy it. But it seems clear that, when the chips are really down, a most decisive response on the part of Israel can be expected. With the possible exception of Carthage during the Punic Wars, almost 2500 years ago, no country in the world, no country in recorded history, has ever been threatened with extinction. Israel is the one exception. Fueled by the extreme left, the "legitimacy" of Israel is a constant topic of discussion. The abolition of the "Zionist entity" gets serious attention, even in the hallowed halls of the United Nations. Iran feverishly pursues the Holy Grail of atomic weapons. Its president has publicly declared – not once, but repeatedly – that Israel is a "tumor" that must be excised and that it must be wiped off the map of the world. Medium-range missiles (so far, fortunately without atomic warheads) are being paraded through the streets of Teheran, with signs attached to them, shamelessly giving their destination as Jerusalem. A few eyebrows are being raised around the world, but otherwise nothing is being done about it.

> "...the viciousness, volume and consistency of this criticism against Israel is such that it cannot be considered as anything but anti-Semitism..."

Because the memory of the Nazi Holocaust still lingers after all these years, the new anti-Semitism is disguised as the socially more acceptable "anti-Zionism." It is pursued and propagated by the radical left. Every leftist demonstration – be it about the war in Iraq, against globalization, for or against whatever else – does inevitably include appeals against "Israeli subjugation of the Palestinians," the "occupation of Palestinian lands by Israel," or simply asks for the elimination of Israel. Sadly, quite a few Jews, having been saturated with leftism from their early years, participate in such demonstrations.

While the propagation of the new anti-Semitism by prestige universities started in Europe (mostly in England), it has found fertile ground in the universities of the United States. The active participation in the new anti-Semitism by the American clergy (beginning with the Presbyterians) is a scandalous reality.

Surely, not everybody who criticizes Israel is an anti-Semite. The actions of Israel, just as the actions of any other countries, are subject to examination and criticism. But the viciousness, volume and consistency of this criticism against Israel is such that it cannot be considered as anything but anti-Semitism – the new anti-Semitism, disguised as anti-Israelism or anti-Zionism. The foolish professors and the hypocritical preachers are besotted by their leftism and by their hatred against Israel and America. Overt vilification of America has to remain muted – it's somewhat dangerous to be too outspoken about it – but Israel, perceived as the satrap and the handmaiden of the United States in the Middle East, is an easy target. Nobody should be fooled. Anti-Semitism is anti-Semitism in whichever way it may be disguised.

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